Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية ،الراي،

Israeli soldier killed in Lebanon

SIDON (AFP) — An Israeli soldier was killed and three others wounded on Wednesday in a Hizbollah ambush in the occupied border zone in South Lebanon, security sources said. Guerrillas of the Islamic Resistance Movement, the military arm of the Hizbollah, ambushed the patrol near Beaufort castle, which overlooks the central sector of Israel's self-declared "security zone." A military vehicle which was on its way to the castle was directly hit by a Sager rocket and machine-gun fire. An Israeli soldier died on the spot and helicopters were seen evacuating the three other wounded soldiers. The attack occurred while an Israeli tank and an armoured personnel carrier were stuck in the Mud, with about 30 troops trying to pull out the vehicles under the protection of a helicopter, witnesses said. A Hizbollah spokesman said guerrillas had simultaneously fired rockets against an Israeli position in the nearby Ali Taher area.

King receives Erakat

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday received at the Royal Court Palestinian Local Government Minister Saeb Erekat and discussed with him the latest developments in the Middle East peace process, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track. Mr. Erekat expressed appreciation of the Jordan's efforts to give impetus to the peace process so as to help Palestinians regain their legitimate rights on their national soil. Attending the meeting was Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Omar Khatib.

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23-member Majali government is sworn in

4 members of Kabariti government retained; most newcomers technocrats with long experience

Royal letter of designation entrusts Majali with continuing peace process and support for Palestinians, ensuring fair and free elections and cleansing the administrative system

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

A 23-MEMBER Cabinet headed by Abdul Salam Majali took the oath of office on Wednesday entrusted with overseeing parliamentary elections, continuing the peace process and implementing sweeping reforms a few hours after Abdul Karim Kabariti submitted his government's resignation.

Dr. Majali, who served as prime minister between May 1994 and January 1995, retained four members of the Kabariti government and named Abdullah Ensour and Jawad Anani as deputy prime ministers. All others in the new cabinet are largely technocrats with vast experience in their respective fields (see separate cabinet list and profiles of the ministers on page 3).

Prime Minister Majali, 71, and all members of his cabinet except Fayez Tarawneh, a former minister and current ambassador to the U.S. who will now serve as foreign minister, were sworn in at the Royal Court. Dr. Tarawneh will be sworn in next week in Washington when the King visits the U.S. for talks with President Bill Clinton, officials said.

In an unusually-worded letter accepting Mr. Kabariti's resignation, the King said he had found the outgoing prime minister "more interested in his media image" than solving the country's problems.

"Your name was on the top of the list of candidates for the post but in the past few days I began to ask myself if you were really capable of carrying out your duties and even whether you were the same young man whom I chose to head the government" in February last year, the King said.

His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan with the Cabinet of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali after Wednesday's swearing-in ceremony (photo by Yousef Allan)

"In difficult times you demonstrated that you were more interested in your media image than you were in finding solutions to the country's problems," King Hussein told Mr. Kabariti, 47.

The King specifically referred to the problem of orphans in the country and the visits he made along with Mr. Kabariti to a hospital where an orphaned girl was treated and to the Al Hussein Welfare Institute and said he had expected the prime minister to take swift action to address the shortcomings that led to the problem but was disappointed.

See page 9 for full texts of formal letters of resignation, designation and acceptance

Subsequently, the King ordered the Hashemiyeh Palace to be turned into a home for orphans and ordered a complete review of the conditions of the various orphanages in the country.

"This is their right and the palace should be theirs instead of remaining as a guest house for a state that

had neglected them for long, something that does not honour anyone," said the King.

"I excuse you and hope you will enjoy rest and resume your work as a loyal Jordanian on whom I have always pinned great hopes but who has been overburdened by the great weight of responsibility," the King told the outgoing premier. "I hope you will continue to serve as a model of good morals and human values without which life can be meaningless."

Mr. Kabariti, who took office as prime minister in February 1996 after serving in various capacities in several governments, was entrusted with carrying out a "white revolution" that essentially aimed at transforming almost every aspect of life in the Kingdom.

In his letter of resignation, Mr. Kabariti said he had carried out every instruction of the King and that he had always upheld honesty, dialogue and non-compromise over the truth.

"As to the problems we faced, they were a result of my own resolution, estimation and deeds," he said. "I thank God I was absolved by the vow I took in front of you...."

Earlier in the day, Mr. Kabariti told reporters he had not expected the sudden change in government.

"Events, changes and developments, whether locally or regionally, always surprise us," he said after chairing the last session of his Cabinet and before heading for the Royal Court to submit his resignation.

"His Majesty wanted to have a new start and he wanted to choose Abdul Salam Al Majali to lead the new team for the coming

(Continued on page 2)

Following is the list of Cabinet members sworn in on Wednesday, March 20, 1997:

1. Abdul Salam Majali — Prime Minister and Minister of Defence
2. Abdullah Ensour — Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development
3. Jawad Anani — Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs
4. Riyad Shakaa' — Minister of Justice
5. Fayez Tarawneh — Minister of Foreign Affairs
6. Bassam Saket — Minister of Transport and Telecommunications
7. Abdul Salam Abbadi — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs
8. Rima Khalaf — Minister of Planning
9. Tawfiq Khreishan — Minister of Municpal and Rural Affairs and the Environment
10. Munther Masri — Minister of Education and Higher Education
11. Nasser Lawzi — Minister of Public Works and Housing
12. Sa'adeddin Juma' — Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs
13. Nathir Rashid — Minister of Interior
14. Ashraf Kurdi — Minister of Health and Medical Care
15. Munther Haddadin — Minister Water and Irrigation
16. Mohammad Saleh Horani — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources
17. Hani Mulki — Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply
18. Suleiman Hafez — Minister of Finance
19. Qassem Abu Ein — Minister of Culture and Youth
20. Saleh Khasawneh — Minister of Labour
21. Mijhem Khreisha — Minister of Agriculture
22. Mohammad Kheir Mamser — Minister of Social Development
23. Akel Biltaji —Minister of Tourism and Antiquities
24. Samir Mutawe' — Minister of State for Information Affairs

Merits not 'wasta' should guide civil service appointments — new premier

By Farida Salfiti
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Earlier this month, one day after His Majesty King Hussein appeared on Jordan Television decrying the state of orphaned and unfortunate children and calling for sweeping reforms in the Kingdom, Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali spoke to the Jordan Times in an interview and spelled out his vision for the changes that need to be made in government.

Dr. Majali emphasised that proper reform could only be achieved by enforcing a complete decentralisation of government, and putting an end to the "wasta" (favours granted on the basis of connection and not merit). The two are linked in that the decentralisation of government will help eliminate the "wasta" and decrease corruption, Dr. Majali said.

As part of a process leading to complete decentralisation, Dr. Majali said ministries should be allocated their own separate budgets, enjoying executive powers and appointing a watchdog so that spending would be accountable. This, he said, will help reduce the negative effects of the "wasta" and corruption.

Those social ills will decrease, according to Dr. Majali, when a minister

(Continued on page 2)

Al Hassan — heir to the Throne

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan celebrates the 50th birthday of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan today.

Crown Prince Al Hassan Ben Talal is the 42nd generation direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) through the male line of the Prophet's grandson Al Hassan.

Crown Prince Hassan's branch of the Hashemite family ruled in Mecca from 1201 (C.E.) until 1925 (C.E.). The Crown Prince's great grandfather, Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, Emir of Mecca and later King of the Hejaz led the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 against the Turkish colonial occupation of Arab lands, thereby freeing and creating the modern states of Hejaz, Syria, Iraq and Transjordan. Sharif Hussein's second son, King Abdullah, founded the emirate of Transjordan on April 11, 1921. The Emirate assumed the name of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan upon formal independence from Britain on March 22, 1946.

Crown Prince Hassan was born in Amman on March 20, 1947, to his father Prince (later King) Talal Bin Abdullah and his mother Princess (later Queen) Zein Al Sharaf Bint Jamil. He is the youngest brother of His Majesty King Hussein (b. Nov. 14, 1935) and HRH Prince Mohammad (b. Oct. 2, 1940), and the older brother of Princess Basma (b. May 11, 1951).

His Royal Highness underwent his primary education in Jordan before

going to Summerfields Preparatory School — and then to Harrow — in England. He then went on to Christ Church, Oxford, from where he received a B.A. (Hon.) in Oriental Studies in 1967. He subsequently received his M.A.

On Aug. 28, 1968, His Royal Highness married Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, who comes from a distinguished family of the Indian subcontinent. Her late father, H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ikramullah worked closely with the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Janah, and was Pakistan's first secretary of state for foreign affairs and many times an ambassador. Her Royal Highness's mother, Begum Shaista Suhrawardy Ikramullah, is a writer and the first female member of parliament in Pakistan, as well as an ambassador. Moreover, Princess Sarvath's paternal uncle was vice-president of India, and her maternal uncle was prime minister of Pakistan. Their Royal Highnesses have four children: Princess Rahma (b. Aug. 13, 1969), Princess Sumaya (b. May 14, 1971), Princess Badiya (b. March 28, 1974), and Prince Rashid (b. May 20, 1979).

See inside for special supplement on Prince Hassan's birthday

In April 1965, His Royal Highness was officially invested as Crown Prince and heir to the Hashemite throne of Jordan. Since then he has constantly served as His Majesty King Hussein's closest political advisor, deputy and confidant, as well as Regent in his absence.

During this time, His Royal Highness has also personally initiated and directed a number of Jordanian and international institutes and committees. In Jordan he has chaired the 1973-1975; 1976-1980; 1981-1985 and 1986-1990 National Development Plan Committees. In 1972, he founded the Royal Scientific Society; in 1978 the Bilad Al Sham Conference; in 1980 the Al al Bait Foundation; in 1981 the Arab Thought Forum; in 1982 the Forum Humanum (renamed, in 1988, the Arab Youth Forum); and in 1987 the Jordanian Higher Council for Science and Technology. He has also established and directed, in Jordan, the Islamic Scientific Academy; the Biannual Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan; the Hashemite Aid and Relief Agency; the Centre for Educational Development; the Centre on Refugees in Yarmouk University; and most recently, the new Al al

(Continued on page 2)

New Cabinet seen to have potential for change but will face challenges

By Maria Bizri
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The abrupt change in government on Wednesday, drew mixed reactions from Jordanians ranging from indifference and high optimism sparked by what many saw as the vast experience of the new prime minister, Abdul Salam Majali, and most of his colleagues.

Writer Rami Khouri said: "There seems to be a lot of technocratic experience in the Cabinet. Most of these ministers have been in and out of government for the past 20 odd years."

"The majority of these ministers are very impressive," he added, stressing that what remains to be seen is whether "they can change and become more modern thinking in order to comply with the country's transitional path to democracy."

The outgoing government of Abdul Karim Kabariti, Dr. Khouri said, received a lot of complaints from people who believed that it was not adhering to the spirit of democracy.

"Dr. Majali, on the other hand, has proved himself many times and has a trademark of efficiency and honesty rather than creativity. He has also spoken of and engaged in democracy to an extent. It remains to be seen whether he will actually do what is needed, specially when it comes to cutting down the bureaucracy."

In terms of foreign policy, more specifically Jordanian-Israeli relations, Dr. Majali has vast experience, Dr. Khouri said.

"He was head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace negotiations in 1991 as well as co-signer of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in 1994. His exposure gives him an edge in terms of relations with Israel, although I believe that he will be continuing the trend of the past two years. Let us not forget that when it comes to Jordanian-Israeli relations, however, the grand lines will be drawn by His Majesty the King," Dr. Khouri added.

"It is hard to guage how the new government will

(Continued on page 2)

PNA rejects Netanyahu's call to accelerate final status talks

Israeli court turns down appeals against new settlement

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has proposed completing talks on the final status of Palestinian territories in the next six months instead of the scheduled two years, Israeli public television reported Wednesday.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) immediately rejected the call.

"Netanyahu is trying to turn attention from the bulldozers that are building a new Israeli settlement in East Jerusalem," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat told AFP.

"He is trying to destroy the basis of the (Mideast) peace process launched in 1991 in Madrid, along with the autonomy accords, so as not to respect these commitments, notably on the next two Israeli troop pullbacks from the West Bank," Mr. Erekat said.

Meanwhile Israel continued work on the new Jewish settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab East Jerusalem despite international criticism and Arab warnings that it could provoke Palestinian violence.

The Israeli supreme court on Wednesday rejected two appeals against the construction of the so-called Har Homa settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim.

Commenting on the Israeli television report that Mr. Netanyahu was proposing an acceleration of talks with the Palestinians, Mr. Erakat said the PNA had received no formal proposal on the final-status negotiations.

The 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace accords negotiated in Oslo call for the discussions to begin this week and be completed by May 1999 on sensitive issues such as a Palestinian state, the future of Arab East Jerusalem, the borders of the self-rule areas and the return of Palestinian refugees.

But the talks have been delayed after Palestinians walked out to protest Israel's construction of the new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem and its

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23-member Majali government is sworn in

(Continued from page 1)

period so as to continue with the path of reform and reconstruction and give some more vigour to our role, whether in the Arab role or in the region," said Mr. Kabariti, who represents a Maan Governorate seat in the Lower House of Parliament.

Mr. Kabariti also sent a message of congratulations to the incoming prime minister and wished him success in his mission.

Mr Kabariti praised Dr. Majali's support for the outgoing government and thanked him for "serving as a brother providing guidance and advice with your vision and your wisdom."

"My colleagues and I congratulate you on His Majesty King Hussein's confidence in you and we wishing you success in bearing the responsibility and the heavy burden of government," he said.

The appointment of Dr. Majali indicated that the King was restoring to the helm of the country one of the veteran figures whose successfully led Jordan's negotiations with Israel that culminated in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed in October 1994.

Among the immediate tasks facing Dr. Majali is to oversee the next parliamentary elections, expected to be held before the end of the year and maintain the peace process.

In his letter of designation to Dr. Majali, the King said he expected the new government to continue the peace process and to "free it from all obstacles at all levels until the achievement of a permanent and comprehensive peace...."

He said he also expected the Majali government to continue Jordan's support for the Palestinian people until they establish their own state on their land.

On the internal front, the King asked Dr. Majali to carry out sweeping reforms in the administrative system by "ridding the government institutions of inefficiency and loss of vitality and inability to effect change, develop and modernise..."

The King entrusted Dr. Majali with continuing the democratisation process and to ensuring that the next parliamentary elections are held in "a fair and free manner that would not cause any suspicion or incite calls for intervention by any party...."

In his letter of acceptance, Dr. Majali pledged to carry out the King's instructions in terms of running a transparent administration, conducting a fair and free election, caring for the orphans, building Jordan's relations with all Arab and friendly countries, continuing economic reforms, cleansing the administrative system, supporting the judiciary, fighting corruption and ensuring justice, developing the educational and health sectors, supporting and defendng Arab and Islamic causes, continuing the peace process and maintaining and upgrading the Armed Forces.

Merits not 'wasta' should guide civil service appointments

(Continued from page 1)

does not act or is perceived as an employer, when instead he or she is responsible for drawing up the policies and guidelines of the ministry and overseeing their implementation.

Appointments to the government should be based on merit and qualifications, rather than on regional and geographic distribution, Dr. Majali stressed. Hiring should be done by following the proper recruitment procedures such as advertising for posts, allowing applicants to compete amongst themselves for positions and judging applications, he said.

Dr. Majali also spoke of the need to reduce the number of ministries by either eliminating some, or merging others that duplicate activities.

On the economic front, Dr. Majali said, "we cannot have economic progress except through privatisation." Moreover, he said, the existence of a "shame culture" in Jordan, whereby Jordanians reject performing certain jobs or holding certain professions due to their belief that they are beneath them, hinders the productivity of the nation and increases unemployment. This also leads to the importation of labour from foreign countries to fill those positions that Jordanians shun.

Such a "shame culture," according to Dr. Majali, respects only those who hold university degrees and government posts. This, he said, should be addressed by waging a severe public campaign in the media, universities and schools to educate against the perpetuation of the "shame culture."

In addition, the private sector needs to be improved so that people will no longer feel that a job in it is inferior to a government post. People should be attracted by the benefits of working there, he said. "All our efforts need to be focused on productivity."

Dr. Majali expressed his clear preference for the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government. He said that preventing deputies from holding ministerial posts "is a must and leads to better government."

In an earlier interview with the Jordan Times he said that "fusion," whereby deputies are allowed to become ministers, creates an imbalance that the country could well do without.

Dr. Majali was the only premier, since the reintroduction of parliamentary life in 1989, not to include deputies in his first government. But later he brought in deputies to his government when he needed a strong parliamentary mandate for signing the peace treaty with Israel in 1994.

Dr. Majali said that after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel, and the elimination of the Jordanian-Israeli conflict, the situation had begun to improve in Jordan. This is because there is now a "position that is free from fear. We no longer fear Israel."

Relations with the Arab World need to be improved, he stressed. "But Jordan's relations with the Arab World should be governed by equality and respect and must not be based on fear."

New Cabinet seen to have potential for change

(Continued from page 1)

deal with the opposition, since I believe it will be a more vocal one. Yet, I feel that Dr. Majali will not have many problems when it comes to internal politics and decisions, especially ones concerning the economy and privatisation."

Deputy Nazih Ammarin, who had clashed with Mr. Kabariti following the bread riots in the south in mid-August, expressed reservation about potential change the new government could bring about.

"It is hard to expect exciting transformations, although I believe that the public is relieved and happy with the change, especially since the Kabariti government did not rise to the challenge it faced from Israeli policies," Dr. Ammarin said.

"The truth is that the previous government did not deal with the Palestinian question seriously. It failed to understand that Judaising Jerusalem means displacing Palestinians which will be a problem that Jordan will have to deal with as more and more Palestinians will choose the country as an alternative home," Dr. Ammarin added.

"We need a nationalistic government, one which will understand that the Palestinian problem is in reality a Jordanian security problem as well. We need a government which takes firm stances on important issues, one which will stop normalisation and will strengthen ties with neighbouring Arab capitals," said Dr. Ammarin, adding that only then will the masses and the opposition support the government.

Deputy Ibrahim Zeid Keilani echoed Dr. Ammarin on some points, adding that the change of government was expected.

Mr. Keilani stressed that the country needed a new government to oversee the new elections. "Dr. Majali's government will succeed in strengthening ties with its Arab counterparts, mainly because of the personal relations of Dr. Majali."

Senior banking executive and commentator Wasef Azar said he believes that the new government is a continuation of the previous one.

"I believe that the new government will continue economic reforms successfully and will manage to lead the country in its privatisation."

"One of our main problems, however, is that none of the previous governments have taken the time to reform the civil service in a manner which would comply with the country's transitional path," he said.

"The other problem is that prior governments failed to coordinate and practice real teamwork. Cabinet members, in many cases, start formulating major policies before developing a teamwork strategy. The key issue is coordination and I hope that this government will be courageous enough to coordinate, change and work as a team instead," Mr. Azar said.

Politician and analyst Jamal Sha'er said that more than half the new ministers are known to be highly efficient bureaucrats who, he believes, will be able to act accordingly.

"The newly appointed prime minister will be more comfortable in his position than Kabariti," he said.

"The reality of the matter, however, is that in Jordan we do not have prime ministers. We have the King. People (i.e. prime ministers) come and go, they try to implement policies, some times successfully, others unsuccessfully. Foreign policy is solely directed by the King while prime ministers are total figureheads," he added.

"When a prime minister is sworn in, he will behave as a soldier in the army of King Hussein and will carry whichever order when asked to," Dr. Sha'er said, adding that he is saddened by the constant and quick changes of governments which leaves "very little sense of security."

Former minister and Jordanian negotiator on refugees Marwan Dudin described Dr. Majali as "an old hand with a distinguished record in public service."

"His Majesty is depending on one of his comrades. Majali is already part of the prime ministers club," Mr. Dudin said, adding "in hard times, you are in better hands when you know who you are dealing with."

The new Cabinet, said Mr. Dudin, with the exception of a few, are highly experienced public servants who have held demanding positions.

"Minister of Interior Nathir Rashid, for example, has one of the most tempting records. With such a portfolio, I feel good that he was the man chosen for the position," Mr. Dudin said.

"Minister of Justice Riyad Shaka'a is also a highly applauded technocrat, not to mention Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri and Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh," he added.

"Dr. Majali is a man who likes exposure. He has a Monday circle which I personally attend. When he does not know something he will ask and delegate. Invariably, he delegates the right people. Majali directs and does not interfere."

"We are going through a bottleneck. I believe Majali will capitalise on his experience and exposure with the Israelis and will reach the right decision," said Mr. Dudin, adding that Dr. Majali will be flexible without being too compromising.

"Arab leaders and politicians see Majali as being a capable and responsible man. I believe that he will strengthen Amman's relations with Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo and the Gulf countries. He is a pan-Arabist and will act accordingly," said Mr. Dudin.

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HOTEL
INTER-CONTINENTAL
JORDAN

United Media Services

Al Hassan — heir to the Throne

(Continued from page 1)

Bait University in Mafraq.

On the international stage, His Royal Highness, in 1981, addressing the 36th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, proposed the establishment of a New International Humanitarian Order. This led, in 1983, to his founding and co-chairing of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICIHI), whose final report he presented in 1987 to the secretary general at the 42nd General Assembly.

In the field of religion, His Royal Highness initiated a series of contacts and meetings that evolved into a systematic inter-faith dialogue. These consist primarily of three separate, albeit complimentary, ongoing consultations with the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Chambesy), the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (Vatican) and the Independent Commission on Christian Muslim Relations (Deanery of Windsor).

His Royal Highness has paid official and working visits to numerous nations around the world and has received high decorations from over twenty countries. He holds the rank of Honorary General in the Jordanian Armed Forces and has been awarded Honorary Doctorates from universities in Jordan and abroad. Furthermore, in March 1987, His Majesty King Hussein conferred upon His Royal Highness the Al Hussein Bin Ali Medal, which is Jordan's highest decoration.

His Royal Highness has written numerous published articles and three books, on political and regional issues, in various languages. These are: "A study on Jerusalem" (1979), "Palestinian Self-Determination: A Study on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" (1981), "Search for Peace" (1984) and "Christianity in the Arab World" (1994). His Royal Highness speaks fluent Arabic, English and French, has studied Hebrew, and understands German and Turkish.

His Royal Highness enjoys and promotes many kinds of sports, including squash, scuba diving, swimming, mountaineering and skiing, and regularly plays polo, representing Jordan in international competitions. He holds a black belt fifth Dan in Taekwondo and he is a proficient helicopter pilot.

PNA rejects Netanyahu's call

(Continued from page 1)

limited withdrawal from rural areas in the West Bank.

Under the proposal sent to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, the two sides would begin negotiations immediately on the final status of the self-rule areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to reach an accord by September, Israeli television said.

Israeli Communications Minister Limor Livnat said that the cabinet approved Mr. Netanyahu's proposal last week to go directly into final-status talks.

Unfazed by renewed international condemnation, Israel pursued work on the Har Homa settlement as Palestinian calls for calm and a massive show of Israeli military might kept street protests largely quiet.

The supreme court ruled on an appeal by 29 Arab landowners and Israeli peace activists who argued that city planners only considered the needs of Jerusalem's Jewish population to the detriment of its Arab residents.

Planners "spoke candidly in closed session of the need to thwart Palestinian development in the Har Homa area and to use the planned road grid to cut the Palestinians off from the geographical area surrounding them," one appeal said. However, the justices refused to issue a stop-work order, and instead ordered the government to explain its planning considerations within 60 days.

"I think legally there was enough for the court to intervene," said Tzali Reshef of the Peace Now group. "However, it was politically so loaded they preferred not to."

At first light Wednesday, dozens of Israeli troops took up position on the pine-covered slope for a second day as bulldozers carved up the hillside.

Palestinian leaders appealed for peaceful protests, but said popular anger might be difficult to contain. "We cannot give our people false hope, tell them things will be better when they are not," said Faisal Husseini, the senior Palestinian official in Arab East Jerusalem.

"I have long worked for peace and never despaired. But today I am beginning to despair that peace negotiations will be useful," Mr. Husseini said.

Mr. Husseini and Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Qoureia tried to lead a group of about 30 Palestinians in a march from the encampment to the hill. But Israeli soldiers forced them to stop.

Mr. Netanyahu was unmoved by Palestinian frustrations or the chorus of international condemnation — including from historic ally Washington — which met the start of construction work Tuesday on the 6,500-unit housing project.

The machines cleared boulders and dirt to create an access road and parking lot for construction equipment at the site,as never charged.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-19
PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 ... Oxide & the Gang
14:30 ... Raw Footage
14:45 ... Curiosity Show
15:10 They Came From Outer Space
16:00 ... N.B.A. Basketball
17:00 ... Out of This World
17:30 ... French Programmes
19:30 ... News Headlines
19:35 ... Parenthood
20:00 ... Cinema, Cinema
20:30 The American Chart Show
21:10 ... Kung Fu-The Legend
22:00 ... News in English
22:25 ... Feature Film: "Big Dreams and Broken Hearts"
23:50 ... Tarataa

PRAYER TIMES

04:19 ... Fajr
05:36 ... (Sunrise) Duha
11:43 ... Dhuhr
15:30 ... 'Asr
17:50 ... Maghreb
19:07 ... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590)

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 657440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622369

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Gradual rise in temperatures is expected today with stable and sunny weather conditions prevailing. On Friday, it will be warm as temperatures will rise further. Clouds are expected to build up giving a chance of scattered showers. In Aqaba, skies will partly cloudy, winds southerly moderate and seas calm.

Mini./Max. Temperatures
Amman ... 02/14
Aqaba ... 10/24
Deserts ... 01/16

Jordan Valley ... 08/21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11, Aqaba 24 Humidity readings: Amman 65 per cent, Aqaba 36 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hanna Mansour ... 750197
Dr. Afif Shukri ... 898863
Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh ... 827195
Dr. Sa'id Tawfiq ... 788285
Firas pharmacy ... 661912
Ferdows pharmacy ... 778336
Al Asema pharmacy ... 637055
Al Salam pharmacy ... 636730
Yacoub pharmacy ... 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy ... 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy ... 623672
Najib pharmacy ... 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852
Al Quds pharmacy ... (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Ratib Atallah ... 994434
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ... 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade ... 617101
Blood Bank ... 775121
Highway Police ... 843402
Traffic Police ... 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints ... 605800
Price Complaints ... 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints ... 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints ... 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ... 121
Overseas Calls ... 010230
Central Amman Telephone Reparis ... 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television ... 773111
Radio Jordan ... 774111
Water Authority ... 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615
Electric Power Company ... 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre ... 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, ... 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, ... 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman ... 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital ... 669131
University Hospital ... 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital ... 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali ... 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ... 777101/3
Al-Basbir, ... 775111/26
Army, Marka ... 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital ... 602240/50
Amal Hospital ... 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ... 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ... (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital ... (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ... (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital ... (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital ... (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ... (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital ... (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15 ... Sanaa (RJ)
08:15 ... Bombay (RJ)
09:15 ... Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
09:45 ... New Delhi (RJ)
09:50 ... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:05 ... Beirut (RJ)
10:30 ... Colombo (RJ)
14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:25 ... London (RJ)
16:40 ... Casablanca (RJ)
17:35 ... Moscow (RJ)
18:10 ... Athens (RJ)
19:25 ... Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:30 ... Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
19:55 ... Rome (RJ)
22:30 ... Paris, Aqaba (add) (RJ)

Other Flights
11:00 ... Doha (Q7)
12:40 ... Doha (GF)
13:30 ... Riyadh (SV)
14:10 ... Shariqah (AH)
16:15 ... Dubai (EK)
20:10 ... Beirut (ME)
20:35 ... Cairo (MS)
21:40 ... Tel Aviv (LY)
01:30 ... Amsterdam (KL)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:20 ... Aqaba (RW)
18:55 ... Tel Aviv (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20 ... Beirut (RJ)
07:15 ... Moscow (RJ)
08:15 ... Aqaba, Paris (add) (RJ)
11:00 ... Aqaba, Paris (RJ)
11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
11:05 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:15 .. Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
11:30 ... Rome (RJ)
12:15 ... London (RJ)
12:20 ... Athens (RJ)
20:10 ... Cairo (RJ)
20:15 ... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:45 ... Larnaca (RJ)
21:35 ... Jeddah (RJ)
22:00 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
05:25 ... Aqaba (add) (RJ)

Other Flights
05:05 ... Amsterdam (GA)
06:00 ... Istanbul (TK)
07:35 ... Beirut, London (BA)
07:45 ... Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
15:00 ... Algiers (AH)
15:00 ... Riyadh (SV)
16:00 ... Doha (Q7)
17:15 ... Dubai, Damascus (EK)
21:25 ... Cairo (MS)
22:50 ... Tel Aviv (LY)
02:30 ... Amsterdam (KL)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:50 ... Marka (RW)
20:50 ... Aqaba (RW)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (imported)	1000/700
Cabbage	150/80
Carrot	200/100
Cauliflower	240/120
Cucumber (large)	230/120
Cucumber (small)	340/230
Eggplant	250/120
Fava beans	570/350
Garlic	1550/900
Grape fruit	170/100
Lemon	400/250
Marrow (large)	220/120
Marrow (small)	440/260
Onion (green)	240/160
Onion (dry)	270/150
Orange	440/300
Peas	900/600
Pepper (hot)	550/300
Pepper (sweet)	550/300
Potato	370/260
Radish	170/70
Spinach	230/180
String beans	950/600
Tomato	390/250

Majali returns for new tenure

By Jennifer Hamarneh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Born in Karak in 1925, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali is a 1949 graduate of the Medical College of the Syrian University in Damascus.

In 1953, he received a Diploma of Laryngology and Otology from the Royal College of Surgeons and Physicians in London. Dr. Majali is a fellow of both the Royal College of Physicians and the Third World Academy of Science.

He is also a founder of the Islamic Academy of Science.

Dr. Majali's career has spanned three major fields: medicine, academia and politics.

His earliest post was as medical officer with the Arab Legion from 1949-1950. In 1953 he became an E.N.T. (ear, nose and throat) specialist at an Arab Legion base hospital, Arab Legion, Amman.

By 1956, following the Arabisation of the armed forces, Dr. Majali was appointed to the commander office as E.N.T. consultant to the base hospital of the Jordan Armed Forces.

His career then moved to government when in 1969, Dr. Majali was appointed Minister of Health.

The following year he was appointed Minister of Health and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs.

Then in 1971 Dr. Majali was appointed to one of his most cherished posts, president of the University of Jordan, from where he would be gleaned again to become Minister of Education and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs in 1976.

He returned to the university as president in 1980, until 1989 when he was named an advisor to His Majesty King Hussein.

From 1990-1991, Dr. Majali was director general of the Jordan Health Institute. In 1991 he became advisor to the newly established Jordan University for Women.

In October 1991, Dr. Majali began a mission that led to the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. It was then that the King appointed him as the head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace negotiations.

In May 1993, Dr. Majali was named prime minister.

The peace talks culminated with the signing of the treaty in Wadi Araba on October 26, 1994. Dr. Majali co-signed the treaty with Israel's late Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin.

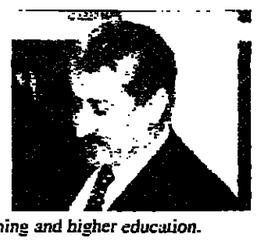
His tenure as prime minister ended in January 1995 when Sharif (now Prince) Zeid Bin Shaker formed his cabinet.

Until his appointment again as prime minister on Wednesday, Dr. Majali served as a member of the Upper House of Parliament.

Dr. Majali and his wife Jamie have three adult children, Sawsan, Samer and Shadi.

Abdul Salam Majali

AMMAN (J.T.) —**The following are profiles of the Cabinet members sworn in on Wednesday. Biographical information on some ministers was unavailable at the time of this printing.**



Abdullah Ensour, Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development
Dr. Abdullah Ensour was born in Salt in 1939. He obtained his bachelor degree from the American University of Beirut and his masters degree from Wayne State University. Dr. Ensour then obtained a doctorate in human resources planning from the Sorbonne in Paris. He served as director general of the Budget Department and director of the Income Tax Department. Dr. Ensour has served as deputy (Balqa) as well as minister of foreign affairs, *planning and higher education.*

Jawad Anani, Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs
Jawad Anani was born in Hebron in 1943. He obtained a bachelor degree in economics from the American University of Cairo and a doctorate degree in economics from the University of Georgia. He worked as an economic researcher at the Central Bank Of Jordan, where he served as head of both the financial department and the research and studies department. Dr. Anani was appointed secretary general of the Ministry of Labour. He has lectured at the Institute of Banking Studies as well as the University of Jordan. Dr Anani has previously served as minister of supply, minister of labour and senator.

Riyad Shakaa, Minister of Justice
Riyad Shakaa was born in Nablus in 1941. He obtained his bachelor degree in law from Cairo University. He was once before appointed minister of justice in the government of Zeid Rifai. Mr. Shakaa is a member of the Royal Commission for Modernisation and Development, which is chaired by HRH Crown Prince Hassan.

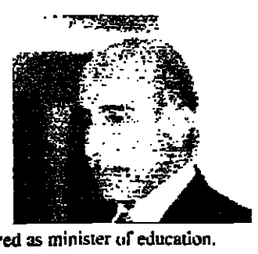
Fayez Tarawneh, Minister of Foreign Affairs.
Member of delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks. Until his appointment as minister of foreign affairs, he was Jordan's ambassador to the United States. Dr. Tarawneh was in Washington at the time of the ceremony.

Bassam Saket, Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Born in 1944, Dr. Saket hails from Salt. He is a BSc. graduate of Baghdad University with a major in economics and political science. He conducted postgraduate work at Jesus College of Oxford University and obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Keele, Staffordshire, England. His professional career began at the Central Bank of Jordan where his last post was as senior economist. He joined the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) as director of the Economic Research Department. From1978-1984 he was Economic Advisor to HRH Crown Prince Hassan. Dr. Saket was director of the Pension Fund for two years, and served as secretary general of the Royal Court for three years. In 1989 he was appointed Minister of Agriculture. His tenure ended when he was elected chairman of the board of the Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC). He was brought back to the Council of Ministers as Minister of Industry and Trade in 1993. In August 1996, Dr. Saket was elected Global Development Forum (GDF), president. Dr. *Saket is married and has three children.*

Abdul Salam Abbadi, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs
Abdul Salam Abbadi was born in Amman in 1943. He received his bachelor degree in Islamic Law from Sharia College in Damascus. Dr. Abbadi worked in public schools until 1966, before obtaining his masters and doctorate degrees in Cairo. He then worked for the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic affairs and as a professor at the University of Jordan. He has twice previously served as minister of Awqaf and Islamic affairs.

Rima Khalaf, Minister of Planning
Dr. Rima Khalaf was born in Kuwait in 1953. She obtained a B.A in economics from the American University of Beirut and her masters and doctorate degrees in the United States. Dr. Khalaf worked for the ministry of planning and served as head of the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation before her appointment as minister of industry and trade. She has also previously served as minister of planning.

Tawfiq Kreishan, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment
Born in Maan in 1947, Mr. Kreishan obtained a bachelors degree in accounting and business administration from Beirut Arab University. He worked as chief accountant at the Jordan Petroleum Refinery. He was elected member of the Lower House of Parliament in 1993. In 1994, he was appointed minister of municipal and rural affairs and the environment in an earlier cabinet of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.



Munther Masri, Minister of Education and Higher Education
Munther Masri was born in Nablus in 1935. He obtained a bachelor degree in electrical engineering from London University, a masters degree from Birmingham University, a BSc in mathematics from London Univeristy and a doctorate in technical education from London University. He has served as director of the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) and *later as a secretary general* at the ministry of education. He previously served as minister of education.

Nasser Lawzi, Minister of Public Works and Housing
Nasser Lawzi was born in Amman in 1957 and graduated from the University of Texas in civil engineering. He worked for the Ministry of Public Works and Housing and in the private sector. He has previously served as minister of transport.

Saadeddin Juma, Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs
Saadeddin Juma was born in Tafileh in 1924. He graduated in administration in the United States. *Mr. Juma has been working for the Prime Ministry* for more than 50 years. He has served as secretary to the Cabinet, head of the personnel section and finally secretary general of the cabinet.

Nathir Rashid, Minister of Interior

Ashraf Al Kurdi, Minister of Health
Born in Amman in 1937, Dr. Kurdi graduated from Baghdad University in 1961. He specialised in internal medicine and neurology at the University of London and is both a Member of the Royal College of Physicians and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Dr. Kurdi worked for the Royal Medical Services from 1965-1979, and was chief of internal medicine and neurology at King Hussein Medical Centre. From 1982 to 1989 he was clinical professor of neurology at the University of Jordan. Dr. Kurdi has maintained a private practice since 1980. He is a founding member of the Jordan Neurological Society established in 1983. He has served as secretary general of the Pan-Arab Union of Neurological Sciences from 1984- 1993. Dr. Kurdi is a member of the Senate. He is the recipient of Al Istiqlal, Al-Kawkab and Distinguished Service medals. He is also the recipient of The Star of Palestine Medal. Dr. Kurdi is married and has four adult sons.

Munther Haddadin, Minister of Water and Irrigation
Dr. Munther Haddadin was born in Ma'in in 1940. He obtained his doctorate in civil engineering *from Washington University. Dr. Haddadin previ*ously served as minister of public works. He was elected president of the Jordan Valley Authority and later worked for the private sector.

Mohammad Saleh Horani, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources

Hani Fawzi Mulki, Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply
Born in 1951, Dr. Hani Fawzi Mulki received his Ph.D. in Industrial and Systems Engineering, from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. He holds an MSc. in Management Engineering *from the same institution. He has received various* honours and scholarships for his research in industrial engineering in both Jordan and Egypt. He currently serves as secretary general for the Higher Council for Science and Technology. Active in the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), Dr. Mulki has served as president, director of the Solar Energy Research Centre and head of the Solar Energy Section for that society. He was also executive director general of the Islamic Academy of Sciences. He was appointed as Assistant Dean of Engineering at Yarmouk University and worked as field engineer at the Ministry of Public Works. Dr. Mulki is married and has two sons.

Suleiman Hafez, Minister of Finance
Mr. Hafez served as secretary general at the Ministry of Finance.

Qassem Abu Ein, Minister of Culture and Youth
Mr. Abu Ein was working as secretary general at the Ministry of Culture prior to his appointment.

Dr Saleh Khasawneh, Minister of Labour
Dr Saleh Khasawneh was born in Edoun in 1940. He received his bachelor degree from Alexandria University in Egypt, a master degree in economics as well as his doctorate in the United States. He has served as director of the Income Tax Department, economic adviser at the Prime Ministry, secretary general of the ministry of labour and lecturer at Yarmouk University.

Mijhem Khreisha, Minister of Agriculture
Mr. Khreisha was born in Al Mowaqqar in 1944. He received his bachelor degree from Damascus University. He subsequently worked as information attaché at the Ministry of Information and chief assistant of the press section at the Royal Court. Mr. Khreisha *also worked as head assistant of Royal Protocol at the Royal Court* subsequent to which he was appointed deputy manager of HRH Crown Prince Hassan's office. He joined the Consultative National Council, was elected governor of Balqa and appointed consultant at the Prime Ministry. He became member of both the Islamic Cultural Society and the board of directors of the Haya Cultural Centre.

Mohammad Kheir Mamser, Minister of Social Development
Dr. Mohammad Kheir Mamser was born in Amman in 1937 and obtained his doctorate in the philosophy of education from Tanta University in Egypt. He served as a member of the National Charter Committee, vice-president of Mu'ta University and secretary general at the Ministry of Youth, dean of student affairs at the University of Jordan as well as Yarmouk University. He also worked as advisor for student affairs at the University of Science and Technology. Dr. Mamser has been awarded Jordan's Indepedence Medal of the First Order.

Aqel Biltaji, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities
Mr. Aqel Biltaji was born in Gaza in 1944. He received his post-secondary education at the American School in Ramallah. Mr. Biltaji taught for two years after which he worked for a company specialising in airport supplies and services in Saudi Arabia. He was also appointed vice presdent for investments at Royal Jordanian (RJ).

Samir Mutawi, Minister of State for Information Affairs. Dr. Samir Mutawi received his bachelor degree in economics from the London School of Economics where he specialised in international relations. He received his GCE Advanced Level in Economics, British Government and Politics, English Literature and Classical Arabic. Dr. Mutawi received his Ph.D. from the Reading University in the United Kingdom. He has worked as media advisor to His Majesty King Hussein. Dr. Mutawi has also worked in the private sector, as vice-president for public relations for Royal Jordanian (RJ) and in various, diverse media, including the BBC World Service Radio, Jordan Television, Radio Jordan, Radio Holland and Al-Kabas daily newspaper in Kuwait. He has been decorated with the Al-Istiklal Medal, the Austrian Silver Cross and the Italian Commander. Mr. Mutawi is married and has four children.

Engineers win Al Hassan award

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In the second year of the Al Hassan Bin Talal Award for Academic Excellence, the Industrial Engineering Department of the University of Jordan won second prize for their project "Connecting to Industry."

The result was officially announced Wednesday in a statement issued by the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST).

The awarding of the prizes is conducted annually on the occasion of HRH Crown Prince Hassan's birthday (March 20).

The HCST committee, headed by HRH Princess Sarvath, said in a statement that it withheld the first award out of a conviction that none of the applications attained the level of excellence which the award mandates.

The committee maintained that it awarded the second prize to the "Connecting to Industry" project as it is a ground-breaking project aimed at closing the gap between universities and local industry, incorporating engineering management, manufacture and automation.

The third prize was granted both to the Department of Islamic Numismatics (DIN) at the Institute for Antiquities and Anthropology of Yarmouk University and the College for Educational Sciences/UNRWA Amman whose project was entitled "Mathematical Data Bank."

The committee stated that it awarded the DIN the third prize for its exceptional role in the dissemination of valuable information on coins, and their publication in its distinguished journal (Yarmouk Numismatics) and its distinctive museum.

The Mathematical Data Bank was awarded the third prize for its adaptability to computer applications as well as its contribution to gauging the mathematical education of students, thereby developing curricula.

First prize winners receive JD 5,000. Second prize winners collect JD 3,000, wile third prize winners are awarded JD 2,000.

The award was established last year to support and appreciate academic, scientific, and technological activities in all institutions involved in education and training.

A ceremony will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) in April, where Prince Hassan and HRH Princess Sarvath are expected to distribute medals, prizes and certificates of acknowledgement.

WITH GREAT GRIEF AND GRAVE SORROW
SAMI GAMMOH CONDOLES THE PASSING AWAY OF HIS FATHER IN LAW AND DEAR FRIEND
PROFESSOR - MAESTRO YOUSEF KHASHO
FOUNDER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THE INSTITUTE OF FINE ART.
HE WAS HONOURED BY
HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN
AND
PRESIDENT YASSER ARAFAT IN
APPRECIATION OF HIS GREAT NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS BOTH IN JORDAN AND PALESTINE.
MAY GOD BLESS HIS SOUL

Sacking of Zaire premier further divides country

KINSHASA (Agencies) — The sacking of Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo further divides what remains of central authority in Zaire as it crumbles under a stunning series of rebel victories in the east of the country.

"Whether we like it or not the political crisis is full blown and it could be the last before the country sinks into all-out chaos," one Western diplomat said, commenting on Mr. Kengo's sacking by parliament Tuesday evening after he had left for an informal African summit on the Zairean crisis in Nairobi.

Other diplomatic sources said they were not as pessimistic, pointing out that Zaire's political parties could "absorb" such upheavals "we are more likely heading towards interminable political and constitutional discussions," one observer said, adding that general elections promised before the end of the year could be indefinitely suspended in light of the latest developments.

Zaire's transitional parliament voted to sack Mr. Kengo and his government and replace him with someone prepared to negotiate with rebel leader Laurent-Desire Kabila, whose forces captured the country's third largest city, Kisangani, Saturday.

But only 470 of the 738 MPs were present — about a dozen of them abstained — and the prime minister's supporters maintain the vote was unconstitutional.

Those who voted in favour of Mr. Kengo's sacking said they backed the idea of direct negotiations involving Mr. Kabila and army leaders.

The military has been increasingly criticial of Mr. Kengo, blaming him for setbacks in the war against the rebels, who have swept acorss eastern Zaire in the last five months and have vowed to march to the capital by June.

Mr. Kengo, in Nairobi to take part in informal talks on the turmoil in his country, made no comment Wednesday morning, but in Kinshasa, Acting Prime Minister Lambert Mende Omalanga said the vote was a "masquerade," and that the government was continuing as normal.

"The government is an institution and there are procedures to follow. We are waiting for official notification which parliament must pass on to us," he said.

"But something tells me it will never be passed on," Mr. Mende added. He said the motion seeking to remove Mr. Kengo was not in line with Zaire's constitution.

"We are working, we are in contact with the prime minister and everyone is reporting to the office," Mr. Mende said.

The latest political turmoil came as an aide to Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko said the ailing head of state would return home at the end of the week from France, where he has been undergoing treatment following cancer surgery.

Mr. Mobutu's personal Boeing 727 was standing by at Nice Airport on the French Riviera, after arriving there Tuesday evening, officials in France said. Mr. Mobutu, 66, has been in a Monaco hospital since the weekend.

The French sources said the plane was not expected to leave France before Thursday.

The statement that Mr. Mobutu will return this week was telephoned to AFP in Kinshasa by the office of Mr. Mobutu aide Honore Ngbanda Nzambo Ko Atume who is currently in Nice at the Zairean leader's side.

Mr. Mobutu's return has been announced repeatedly and repeatedly postponed since then, amid reports of a serious worsening in his state of health.

In Goma, Zaire, more than 10,000 residents braved rain and took to the streets of rebel-held Goma in eastern Zaire Tuesday to hear Mr. Kabila vow his forces would take over Africa's third largest country.

Kabila, head of the alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL), was speaking three days after his rapidly advancing guerrilla force captured Kisangani, Zaire's third largest city.

He promised a temporary ceasefire for 20 kilometres around Kisangani to allow in humanitarian aid and let people who fled return, but said advances elsewhere would continue.

"Everything was looted in Kisangani and we invite all humanitarian organisations and the United Nations to go there to help our people," Mr. Kabila said.

Mr. Kabila singled out the panic-stricken capital-city Kinshasa and the central diamond-mining city of Mbuji-Mayi as next rebel targets. He said his forces were within 400 kilometres of Mbuji-Mayi where he said Zaire's ragged army fled after abandoning Kisangani.

"They will flee from there as they have fled before, what can they do to protect something which cannot be protected, we hear they are already laying down their arms," Mr. Kabila said.

"We want to liberate Kinshasa and the people there need us...Kinshasa will fall," Mr. Kabila told the crowd in the eastern border town that is the seat of the rebel administration.

Military sources in the region said Mr. Kabila's forces were also advancing in mineral-rich Shaba province — where they seized towns of Kalemie, Moba, Pweto and Manono without a fight — and were within 400 kilometres of the capital Lubumbashi.

They said Mr. Kabila's forces also appeared to be heading for towns near Mr. Mobutu's jungle palace at Gbadolite, near the Central African Republic.

The crowd cheered as Mr. Kabila said until French policy changed there would be no room for it in a Zaire under rebel control: "We will bury French people if they try to come here again and take our country from us, we are waiting for them."

France is Mr. Mobutu's last backer in the West. Paris has tried unsuccessfully to get an international force to help Rwandan Hutu refugees trapped in the conflict.

Kisangani residents hoist a young Zairean rebel on to their shoulders during a march through the streets of the city to show their support for rebels who overran undisciplined government forces three days ago. The rebels continue to consolidate territory around Kisangani (Reuter photo)

Taiwan's Lee thanks Powell for U.S. arms sales

TAIPEI (R) — President Lee Teng-Hui Tuesday thanked retired U.S. Military Chief Colin Powell for supporting U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, saying Washington should not compromise Taiwan despite its ties with China.

The visiting Powell, said by some to be considering a run for the White House in 2000, told Mr. Lee that Washington maintained a policy of ensuring Taiwan's safety amid the island's volatile relations with China, its longtime adversary.

"I express sincere gratitude for (Powell's) concern for...The situation across the Taiwan Strait, especially in assisting our country to buy defensive weapons," Mr. Lee was quoted by aides as telling Gen. Powell.

"We can understand the United States engaging in exchanges with Communist China, but we also expect that the United States should not neglect the safety and welfare of Taiwan's 21.3 million people," Mr. Lee said.

In 1993, Washington rebuffed fierce protests from China and agreed to sell 150 F-16 fighter planes to Taiwan.

Washington has approved several subsequent military deals with Taiwan, including the sale of Patriot anti-missile missiles made famous during the 1991 Gulf War overseen by Gen. Powell.

Taiwan was preparing to take delivery of the advanced jet fighters and has begun installing Patriot batteries to defend against China's medium-range ballistic missiles.

China, which has viewed Taiwan as a rebel-held province since a civil war split them in 1949, has warned other countries not to forge diplomatic ties with Taipei or sell arms to Taiwan.

Beijing launched eight months of war games and unarmed missile tests near Taiwan after Mr. Lee made a private visit to New York in 1995 — a journey China interpreted as an attempt to promote Taiwan's independence.

The last round of the manoeuvres, occurring in the run-up to Taiwan's presidential election in March 1996, prompted the U.S. to deploy two aircraft carrier groups to the region — its biggest armada in the region since the Vietnam war.

Washington switched official ties to Beijing from Taipei in 1979, but maintains the right to arm Taiwan — and even defend the island if necessary.

Gen. Powell, who ended a two-day visit to Taiwan Tuesday, said Washington's policy towards Taiwan would not change despite pressure from Beijing.

N. Korean defector's Philippine stay still to be negotiated, officials say

MANILA (AFP) — Top North Korean defector Hwang Jang-Yop will stay in the Philippines for 10 days before he leaves for South Korea, House of Representatives speaker Jose De Venecia said Wednesday.

By "diplomatic arrangement," Mr. Hwang will stay in the Philippines for "10 days" before leaving for Seoul, the congressional leader told a news conference.

However, Foreign Undersecretary Rodolfo Severino said: "We still have to negotiate with the South Koreans the length of stay of Mr. Hwang in the Philippines."

Details of Mr. Hwang's length of stay had yet to be finalised, Mr. Severino said since the "main concern then was to get him out of Beijing as soon as possible."

He added Mr. Hwang did not need a transit visa as he al-ready had a South Korean passport.

Meanwhile, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Blas Ople said Mr. Hwang would be in the country for two weeks, with Manila providing board, lodging and security, before he leaves for Seoul.

Mr. Severino dismissed press reports that other ASEAN members had criticised the Philippines' decision because it set a ragional precedent for accommodating defectors.

"That's only a media invention. We did not hear anything from them, we have not consulted anyone," Mr. Severino said.

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Mr. Hwang, the most senior defector to flee North Korea, "is apparently in Baguio," Mr. De Venecia said, referring to a popular mountain resort in the northern Philippines.

President Fidel Ramos confirmed Wednesday that Mr. Hwang was flown into the Philippines Tuesday and that he would stay in the country "for as long as necessary and as short as possible," but refused to give details, citing concerns for the defector's personal safety.

Kim Jong-Il says food shortages have reached army— report

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il has said severe food shortages are forcing the Socialist country into anarchy and have deprived its 1.1 million-strong military of proper rations, a Seoul magazine said Wednesday.

"The food problem is creating an anarchic state. For this, not only administrative officials but party cadres are to blame," the monthly Chosun quoted Mr. Kim as saying in a speech in December last year.

The magazine did not say how it got hold of the speech, which it said was delivered to mark the 50th anniversary of the North's prestigious Kim Il-Sung University.

"People are roaming everywhere in search of food and even the people's army has problems finding nourishment," Kim Jong-Il said, according to the Conservative news magazine published by the largest circulation Chosun daily.

In it Mr. Kim reportedly urged the government and the party to take "decisive steps" to secure food for the military, saying: "Should the U.S. imperialists know that our military has inadequate rations, they would immediately unleash attacks on us."

Kim Jong-Il, 55, is the uncrowned successor to and eldest son of late President Kim Il-Sung, who had ruled the North since it became a state in 1948 before he died from a heart attack in 1994.

Mr. Kim said he was too busy to take care of all the food problems himself and accused party cadres of sitting through ideological studies, lectures and meetings without taking action to resolve the food shortages.

"Under these sensitive circumstances, it is of utmost importance to strengthen the military. That is why I busy myself with visits to the People's Army units for on-site instruction," Mr. Kim reportedly said.

"Party and administrative officials must take entire charge of the workings of the economy."

He threatened to punish government and party officials "who are sitting on their hands."

The North's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said Wednesday that Mr. Kim had inspected Korean People's Army Unit 834, known as the Kum Song Lifeguard.

"The Korean People's Army is a model revolutionary army in ideology, military technique, morality, cultural level and all other aspects. No force on Earth can match its strength," KCNA quoted him as saying during the visit Tuesday.

In Beijing, the head of the U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP) said Tuesday that the people of North Korea were just weeks away from possible starvation.

"The government itself estimates that by the end of March or (early) April, they will run out of food that they distribute to their people," WFP executive director Catherine Bertini told reporters in Beijing.

She said the average individual was receiving 100 grammes , or about 350 calories, of rice per day. The U.N.'s minimum daily level for refugee maintenance is five times that amount.

"Immediate assistance is absolutely crucial on the part of the international community to stave off malnutrition and possible starvation," she said after a four-day visit to the famine-wracked country.

Ms. Bertini said North Korea faces a food shortfall of some 1.3 million tonnes this year, adding that it would be "almost impossible" for the country to obtain the amount through donations.

International donors, notably Japan and South Korea, have in the past asked the International Red Cross to ensure that the food they send is not going to the military.

No revolution, pacesetter Blair promises Britain

LONDON (R) — Labour leader Tony Blair, buoyed by two new polls showing him well on course to win Britain's coming election, opened his campaign Tuesday by reassuring wary voters there would be no revolution if he took power.

As the ruling Conservatives sought to argue that Labour's moderate facade hid the same tax-and-spend instincts that have kept it out of government for 18 years, Mr. Blair said only his party was capable of leading Britain into the 21st century.

"We promise only what we will deliver, and we will deliver what we promise," he told his opening news conference in London.

"We do not promise a revolution. We promise a government which can bring the country together, heal the divisions of the past and look to the future with confidence," said Mr. Blair, conscious that the middle-class voters he is wooing do not want Labour to return to its left-wing roots.

As he was speaking, Prime Minister John Major was on his way to shore up the ruling party's support in the well-heeled commuter town of Woking, southwest of London.

Mr. Major was still reeling from the double blow of an endorsement of Mr. Blair by Britain's best-selling newspaper, The Sun, and a brace of opinion polls suggesting his Conservatives have a mountain to climb to win their fifth election in a row.

An NOP poll for Reuters showed Labour 25 points ahead of the Conservatives, who are deeply split over Europe and have been unable to shake off an impression that they have run out of steam after nearly two decades in power.

A Gallup poll for the Daily Telegraph gave Labour an even bigger 28 point lead, which politics Professor Anthony King said would give Labour 500 of the 659 seats in the next parliament.

At nine of the last 10 elections, the party that started ahead in opinion polls has seen its lead narrow by polling day. But never has a party been so far ahead as Labour is now.

"Even if the present Labour lead were to be halved to 14 points that would still give Labour a swing in the order of 11 per cent, enough to give Mr Blair as prime minister a majority of nearly 150," Prof. King wrote in the Daily Telegraph.

Mr. Major, convinced he can come back by taking his message to the people, brushed aside the poll pointers.

"I really doubt that. I have lived through bad opinion polls through most of the last six years. Indeed before the last general election, the polls were pretty awful," he told GMTV.

He was equally dismissive of The Sun, which claimed credit for swinging the 1992 election in the Conservatives' favour with a series of vitriolic attacks on ex-Labour leader Neil Kinnock.

"I am unconcerned about The Sun's editorial position, all I ask of The Sun and other newspapers is that they report fairly and adequately what we say and do," he told GMTV.

Mr. Major, frustrated that he is not getting credit for falling unemployment and low inflation, said Mr. Blair was "the chameleon of British politics" who changed his views from day to day.

"Britain is booming. We don't want Labour to throw it all away," the prime minister said.

But the NOP/Reuters poll showed that 35 per cent of voters now trust Labour more to manage the economy against 26 per cent for the Conservatives, Labour's clearest lead yet on the issue.

Mr. Blair and his economics spokesman, Gordon Brown, hammered home the message that they would manage the economy responsibly and set tough rules on public spending and borrowing.

"What the Tories cannot stand is that the policies we set out are popular, practical and in touch with the British people," Mr. Blair said.

But Mr. Major's finance minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke, hit back.

"Is anyone seriously claiming that a Labour government could have done better than we have?" he asked at a news conference.

"When the people of Britain vote on May 1, they will be choosing between a government with a strong, proven track-record of economic success and a superficial, inexperienced Labour Party whose every economic instinct and judgement over the last five years has been proved wrong," Mr. Clarke said.

Meanwhile, Alex Salmond, head of the Scottish National Party (SNP) which seeks an independent Scotland, Wednesday attacked as "laughable" The Sun newspaper's conversion to the devolutionist Labour camp.

The mass-circulation paper, whose English editions Tuesday dropped their support of the ruling Conservatives for the May 1 general election, said Wednesday it would back Labour's plans for greater Scottish autonomy.

Until now, The Sun has supported a fully independent Scotland.

The paper, which has a Britain-wide circulation of over four million and was the only Scottish daily to support independence, said in a front-page editorial in its Scottish editions that it still believed in independence but that Labour's plans were the best way of achieving it.

Mr. Salmond claimed the change of heart by the paper — owned by media magnate Rupert Murdoch — came about only under pressure and "thumbscrews" applied from London.

Labour is by far the biggest party in Scotland and sends 49 MPs to represent the country in the House of Commons. The Tories have 10 Scottish MPs and the SNP just four.

German troops attack foreigners with baseball bats

BONN (R) — Ten German soldiers attacked a group of foreigners with knives and baseball bats in the western town of Detmold overnight in a suspected racist attack, police said Tuesday.

The soldiers, some of them masked, were wearing German army uniforms and helmets when they pursued an Italian and two Turks late Monday night, police said. It was not clear how seriously the victims were injured.

Defence Minister Volker Ruehe issued a statement jointly with army spokesman Hartmut Bagger condemning the attack "in the strongest terms" and said they were ordering an investigation immediately.

Police detained six men in connection with the attack. Three were soldiers stationed at the Rommel Barracks in the village of Augustdorf about five kilometres from Detmold.

Police said some of the soldiers threatened to slit the Italian man's throat while others beat and kicked the Turks, who suffered head injuries. Witnesses said the soldiers shouted racist abuse at their victims.

"We have to act effectively and immediately to maintain confidence in the German Armed Forces, especially in the light of the high international respect they enjoy," Mr. Ruehe and Mr. Bagger said in their joint statement.

They said they regretted "this shameful behaviour of several German army troops towards foreign citizens" and would do everything in their power to punish the assailants and maintain army discipline.

"The attacks are even more tragic because just a few days ago (German soldiers) risked their lives to rescue foreign citizens from the German embassy in Tirana," the statement said.

It was referring to a dramatic rescue operation last Friday in which German troops airlifted about 120 Germans and other nationals from the Albanian capital. During the evacuation they opened fire, the first time German troops had done so under hostile conditions since World War II, breaking a 50-year-old ban on combat operations outside Germany because of the memory of wartime atrocities committed in Nazi-occupied lands.

Last night's attack came a week after the German parliament's armed forces ombudswoman Claire Marienfeld said in her annual report that there were no organised extreme right-wing tendencies in the army.

Kashmir's top separatist leader killed

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Indian army troops gunned down Kashmir's top Muslim guerrilla leader Wednesday, dealing a severe blow to a separatist campaign which has claimed 17,000 lives here since 1989.

Abdul Majid Dar, the Kashmir-based chief of the dominant Hizbul Mujahedeen guerrilla group, was shot dead in Wodhpura, a Kashmiri frontier town 75 kilometres north of Srinagar, an army spokesman said.

He was wanted for scores of murders and attacks on Indian troops.

The spokesman described Dar's death as a major success for the army and said the slain militant carried tens of thousands of dollars on his head as a reward for his arrest.

He said a house-to-house search was on in Wodhpura town for other guerrilla fighters hiding there.

"Dar always had some 50 fighters guarding him," one official added.

Muslim guerrillas described Dar's death as a major setback to the anti-India rebellion raging in the Himalayan valley for the past eight years.

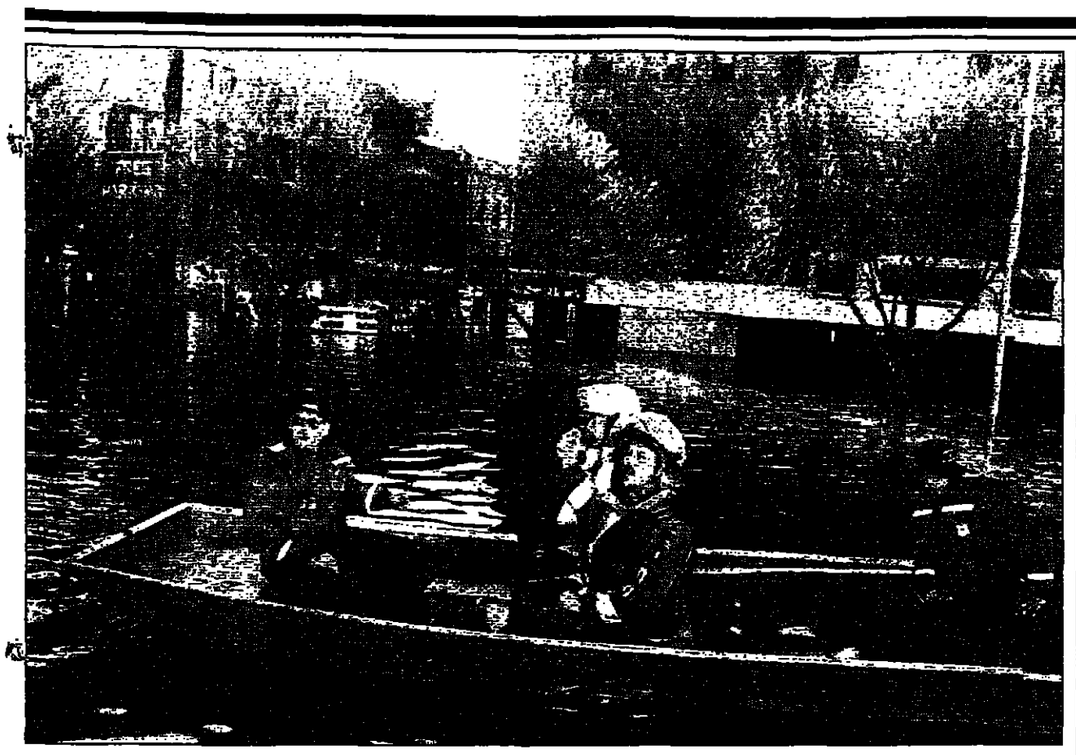
"It is the biggest loss for the militant movement in Kashmir," said Gulam Rasul Dar, a close associate of the slain rebel leader.

"Dar was not only the chief of the Hizbul Mujahedeen but also the advisor of each and every separatist group in Kashmir," he added.

Shaid-Ul Islam, former chief of the Hizbullah separatist group, said: "If he is dead then it is a terrible loss not only to the Hizbul Mujahedeen but to the entire movement."

The hardline Hizbul Mujahedeen, which advocates Kashmir's secession to Pakistan, is the most powerful of the region's two dozen Muslim separatist groups.

Dar was appointed "chief administrator" of the group after the guerrilla group's leader, Sayed Salaudin, shifted to Pakistan-controlled Kashmir to direct military operations against India.



A U.S. Coast Guard boat patrols in downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota, to clear the area of the burning security building (at back) so that a plane can make a drop of a fire-fighting chemical. Firefighters were unable to reach the fire hydrants as the Red River flooding continues (Reuter photo)

U.S. river city evacuates in face of massive flood

GRAND FORKS, North Dakota (AFP) — More than 8,000 people were evacuated from this river city over the weekend as residents and National Guard members struggled to stave off catastrophe from a flooding Red River.

With the failing of Grand Forks' strategic downtown clay dike along the Red River, authorities moved about one-fifth of the eastern North Dakota town's population of 50,000 to four emergency shelters set up on an air force base and three colleges outside the city, officials said.

City firefighters were unable to battle a blaze that broke out in a large downtown building because there was no pressure in the water mains, Cable News Network (CNN) television reported.

A tanker airplane flew over the building and dropped water over the flames while officials awaited the arrival of a special coast guard team armed with high-power pumps, CNN reported.

Officials closed the bridge over the Red River linking grand forks to its sister city, east Grand Forks, in neighbouring Minnesota.

One-third of the streets were under water as the swollen Red River poured over and through protective dikes.

"I want to assure the people of Fargo and Grand Forks that our thoughts and prayers are with them during this very difficult time," President Bill Clinton said in a statement late Saturday.

Authorities issued an immediate evacuation order for the area at 5 a.m. (1100 GMT). Sergeant Rob Keller of the North Dakota Army National Guard told AFP.

For the first time in the state's history, Serg. Keller said, the Red River was maintaining a crest almost 160 kilometres long between Wahpeton and Grand Forks as it flowed north to Canada.

Weather officials said the river was expected to peak at 16.2 metres before midnight as rising temperatures melted ice jams in the numerous tributaries flowing into the Red.

Regular flood level is set at 8.4 metres, officials said.

The water was expected to remain high for another four to five days.

Using four-tonne trucks and humvees, 350 National Guard members were helping residents leave the area, advising them to take only vital medications.

The National Guard also was working against time to remove the carcasses of 1,000 cattle that had been driven into icy streams by the last winter blizzard, two weeks ago.

As temperatures rose to the 16-degree Celsius (60-degree Fahrenheit) level over the weekend, the carcasses threatened to pollute the warming streams.

A total 110,000 cattle have perished in North Dakota because of the unexpected blizzard and floods, which are also being blamed for the deaths of seven people.

Serg. Keller said the blizzard wreaked $21.5 million in damage to farm buildings, while the floods have inundated 1.7 million acres of farmland.

No statistics were available for statewide flood damage.

Ball in Mobutu's court as direct talks offer withers

KINSHASA (AFP) — Prospects of face-to-face peace talks between rebel leader Laurent Kabila and Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko dimmed Sunday following Kabila's public vilification of the head of state as a "Satan" who had to go.

Mr. Mobutu, who was meeting Benin President Mathieu Kerekou in Kinshasa Sunday, has made no immediate reply to what observers say is an ultimatum from the rebels designed to smash a face-saving exit for the embattled president.

In a public meeting before 20,000 people Saturday in rebel-held Lubumbashi, Zaire's second-largest city, Mr. Kabila said the only subject to be discussed was Mr. Mobutu's resignation.

"Mobutu must negotiate with me on the conditions of his departure. He should give up power, give up his army, put down the arms so there can be a peaceful transfer of power," Mr. Kabila said.

The rebel leader, whose forces now control half of Zaire after six months of fighting aimed at ending Mr. Mobutu's 32-year reign, pledged to continue the offensive until the capital Kinshasa falls. He predicts that will happen by June.

It was Mr. Kabila's first public appearance in the capital of the mineral-rich Shaba province — now reverted to its old name, Katanga — since it was taken 11 days ago, the rebels' biggest prize yet in their military campaign.

Mr. Kabila's words rebuffed Mr. Mobutu's agreement in principle to an encounter with the rebel leader at the request of South African President Nelson Mandela.

Mr. Mobutu's special advisor Honore Ngbanda Nzambo, said Friday that Mr. Mobutu had accepted Mr. Mandela's invitation, but practical details on time and date remained to be sorted out.

But, given also the rebels' refusal to declare any ceasefire before talks, the chances of an encounter appear remote.

Later Friday, the Zairean government called for a "complete and immediate cessation of hostilities."

Mr. Mandela's spokesman was more confident, saying Mr. Mobutu could meet Mr. Kabila in Cape Town "in the first part of next week, probably Monday or Tuesday."

Mr. Nzambo had said the cancer-stricken Mobutu, 66, would categorically not be discussing stepping down or going into exile.

And, he said, Mr. Mobutu would stand as a candidate at any future presidential elections organised in Zaire.

In Washington, the U.S. State Department urged dependents of embassy staff in Zaire to leave, and warned its nationals against all travel to the country.

Troops from Belgium, France and the U.S. are on standby to evacuate foreign nationals from Kinshasa.

Patten says China does not trust Hong Kong

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten said Sunday China did not trust Hong Kong and was intent on tightening its grip on the territory once it reverts to Chinese rule at midnight on June 30.

Mr. Patten's remarks follow the announcement of curbs on protests in Hong Kong and a ban on foreign funding for political groups, which the territory's future leader Tung Chee-Hwa has vowed to introduce.

"The decision seems to be based on their wish to have a tighter control over life here. They don't — they should but they don't — they don't yet trust Hong Kong," he said as a weekly columnist on a local radio programme.

Mr. Patten said China's plan to introduce a multi-seat, single-vote electoral system in 1998, departing from the current single-seat, single-vote formula, was designed to exclude pro-democracy figures.

The electoral system for the 1998 polls, the first after Hong Kong's handover, is rapidly emerging as a new arena of polemics in Hong Kong, following a quarrel over China's plan to dissolve the current elected legislative council and appoint an interim chamber on July 1.

"The real reason for advocating a multi-member single seat system is, as I said in 1993, to reduce the number of pro-democracy candidates who can get elected," Mr. Patten said.

"Today 17 out of the 20 geographical constituencies are represented by pro-democracy candidates. For some that is the beginning and the end of the argument," he said.

He urged Hong Kong people to speak their minds on changes to the electoral system. "I do hope that Hong Kong will be given the chance to speak out on this," he said.

Hong Kong, a British colony for more than 150 years, reverts to China as a quasi-autonomous region under a treaty allowing its capitalist system to continue for 50 years.

British election rivals lock horns over Europe

LONDON (R) — Election rivals locked horns Sunday over Britain's role in Europe with Prime Minister John Major accusing Labour leader Tony Blair of surrender in advance.

But the opposition parties said open civil war had broken out in the ruling Conservative party over how much sovereignty should be conceded to Brussels.

The latest opinion polls in the run-up to the May 1 election showed Labour with a lead of 14 to 19 points over the Conservatives.

Mr. Major, who has adopted a "wait-and-see" stance over Britain joining a single European currency, said Mr. Blair had surrendered his negotiating position in advance — if he is British leader at the June European Union summit in Amsterdam.

"No credible politician about to enter into a negotiation with other people would hand over all his negotiating cards in advance in the way Mr. Blair has done. It is an absurdity," Mr. Major told the Sunday Telegraph.

The Conservatives last week depicted Mr. Blair as a ventriloquist's dummy on the knee of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in a campaign advertisement that party grandees were swift to condemn.

In his six-and-a-half embattled years as premier, Mr. Major has been constantly dogged by Conser-vative party mutinies over Europe with his own stance becoming increasingly Eurosceptic.

Sunday media reports said pro-European Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke would be keen to join any contest to succeed Mr. Major should he step down after the election.

On the Eurosceptic wing of the badly divided party, he could face challenges from Defence Secretary Michael Portillo and Home Secretary (Interior Minister) Michael Howard.

Labour, which has dropped much of its socialist dogma in a bid to win crucial middle class votes, believes it is now poised to end 18 years in the political wilderness.

Finance spokesman Gordon Brown said Conservative splits over Europe meant that the race to succeed Mr. Major had already begun.

Mr. Brown said the Conservatives were "a party in civil war...incapable of governing."

His accusation was echoed by Paddy Ashdown of the centrist Liberal Democrats who told BBC television: "The Conservatives are in open civil war with themselves."

But leading Eurosceptic Howard was quick to taunt Mr. Blair over Europe, telling GMTV: "The things which we know Tony Blair would sign up to — the surrender of the veto, more majority voting, the social chapter — would put us firmly on the federal path, firmly on the path to a federal European super state.

Bulgarian reformists cruise to parliamentary majority

SOFIA (R) — With almost all results counted from Bulgaria's parliamentary election, the reformist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) was set for a comfortable majority enabling it to push through tough but vital economic reforms.

The Electoral Commission said Sunday the UDF and its coalition allies had won 52 per cent of the votes cast, which would give them 136 or 137 seats in the 240-member parliament.

Their victory seals the rejection of the ex-Communist Socialists in Bulgaria, a process begun with the election of President Petar Stoyanov on the UDF ticket in November.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), toppled in February by UDF-led mass protests, had controlled almost all of Bulgaria's nine governments since the end of one-party rule in 1989.

UDF leader Ivan Kostov said the new government's four priorities would be carrying out reforms agreed with the International Monetary Fund, fighting organised crime and corruption, opening secret police files of public figures, and bringing Bulgaria into the European Union and NATO.

With nearly 98 per cent of the vote counted, the Socialists had 22 per cent of the vote or 57 seats and three smaller parties were also set to enter parliament. Final results are expected Tuesday.

"Today the big winner is the nation," said an editorial in Standard. "It gave the UDF all the power so the leaders of the Democratic Forces should keep that in mind and listen more carefully to the voice of the people."

Mr. Stoyanov indicated Saturday night that he expected the UDF parliamentary group to nominate Mr. Kostov as prime minister.

"In every country after a decisive victory of a certain political force its leader becomes prime minister," he said.

Troud daily advised Mr. Kostov to show humility and rigour, and to avoid the mistakes of former Socialist Prime Minister Zhan Videnov, who resigned last December. "First, to listen to his people and to respect others. Second, not to think that he's unique or irreplaceable," the paper advised.

Bulgaria is starting belatedly along the path of market reform already followed by many other former East Bloc states.

A restrictive fixed exchange rate regime is due to be introduced in June to instil monetary discipline and restore confidence in the lev currency, which went into free fall in January while Bulgaria was without effective government.

Saturday's turnout, at 58 per cent, was the lowest for any election since the end of one-party rule in 1989, but the election results had been seen as almost a foregone conclusion.

Three smaller groups were set to enter parliament. The Union for National Salvation Coalition grouping ethnic Turks and monarchist organisations seeking the return of exiled King Simeon had 7.5 per cent so far, comfortably above the four per cent threshold and giving them 20 seats.

They are joined by the Euroleft, a new movement set up by Socialist dissidents, with 5.5 per cent and 14 seats, and the Bulgarian Business Bloc, led by maverick populist George Ganchev, with 4.95 per cent and 12 or 13 seats.

An interim cabinet led by Sofia's popular UDF Mayor Stefan Sofianski has run the country since February, winning pledges of $1.2 billion from international lenders and kicking off the reform process the new government must continue.

Mr. Sofianski has said he wants to complete his mandate as mayor, but is expected to return to national politics at a later date.

After Communist leader Todor Zhivkov was toppled in 1989, leading Communists reemerged as the Bulgarian Socialist Party and continued in government. The UDF won elections in 1991 but their coalition with the ethnic Turkish party collapsed after only 11 months.

Sinn Fein calls for votes in U.K. polls

MONAGHAN, Ireland (R) — The IRA's political wing Sinn Fein began its annual conference Sunday with a call for votes in Britain's May 1 election to force the next London government to invite it to peace talks.

"Every vote for Sinn Fein increases the pressure on the incoming British government to engage in a process of real and credible negotiations involving all of the parties," Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, Martin McGuinness, told delegates.

"These are crucial elections in which Sinn Fein can change the political landscape of this country for ever," he said.

Sinn Fein, which shares the Irish Republican Army's goal of ending British rule of Northern Ireland, is barred from Belfast peace talks because of the guerrillas' ending of a 17-month ceasefire in February 1996.

The Irish, British and U.S. governments have all refused to talk to Sinn Fein since the IRA attacks and have vilified the party for its failure to get the guerrillas to restore their ceasefire and end violence for good.

But Mr. McGuinness said Sinn Fein was confident of winning up to three parliamentary seats in the British election, which would confront the British and Irish governments with refusing to negotiate with democratically elected representatives.

"A strong mandate for Sinn Fein at the forthcoming elections will make it extremely difficult for either government to ignore our democratic right to represent our electorate in negotiations," he said.

"A strong mandate for Sinn Fein will reverberate throughout the corridors of power in Dublin, London and Washington as well as European capitals.

"It will bring untold pressure to bear on the incoming British government and the Irish government to engage in a credible process of inclusive peace negotiations," he said.

Mr. McGuinness made no mention of the party's policy of refusing to occupy seats it wins in the British parliament because it would entail allegiance to Britain which it sees as the illegal colonial ruler of Northern Ireland.

Nor did he make any hint of a new IRA ceasefire but said only that Sinn Fein wanted the Belfast talks "to take place in a peaceful atmosphere."

Amber Carrillo of Oklahoma City Saturday leaves a memorial for her father Michael Carrillo, who was killed in the Oklahoma City federal building bombing, on the fence during a memorial service marking the second anniversary of the bomb blast that killed 168 people. The names of the victims were read aloud and the families were allowed to place flowers inside the fenced off area at the site (Reuter photo)

Oklahoma City marks 2nd anniversary of bombing

OKLAHOMA CITY (R) — The pealing of church bells broke 168 seconds of silence, one second for each of the dead, Saturday as hundreds of mourners gathered to mark the second anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Family members and survivors bowed their heads and wept as they remembered those who died in the April 19, 1995 blast that ripped apart the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

The period of silence began at 9:02 a.m. CDT (1402 GMT), the moment when the massive truck bomb exploded in the worst civilian bombing attack in U.S. history.

The second anniversary of the bombing came just a few days before opening arguments were expected to begin in the trial of bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh in Federal Court in Denver.

Prosecutors charge that Mr. McVeigh and former army buddy Terry Nichols blew up the Murrah building to avenge the deaths of an estimated 80 Branch Davidians in an FBI siege at their Waco, Texas compound exactly two years before. The two were said to hate the U.S. government.

The silence at the ceremony was interrupted by the chilling sound of an ambulance racing through downtown Oklahoma City. A fly-over of military jets soared across the brilliant blue sky in the missing man formation.

Mourners placed flowers on the grassy field where the Murrah building once stood as the names of the dead were read one-by-one in a grim reminder of the human toll of the attack.

This year's ceremony was more subdued than that of the first anniversary in 1996, with fewer people in attendance and less media coverage. But family members said their sense of loss was undiminished.

"We feel a need to mark this day. We need this we need the hugs," said Kathleen Treanor, whose daughter and parents-in-law were killed in the blast.

Janie Coverdale, whose grandsons, Aaron and Elijah, were among 19 children who died in the bombing, said sometimes she still thinks that the two boys are alive. "It will take a long time (to heal)...We have to keep this alive in other people's minds," she said.

For others, the memories of the tragedy brought back by the ceremony were too overwhelming. Stephen Hull, who helped give emergency treatment to bombing victims, walked away while the names of the dead were read.

"I just can't listen. I thought I could come down here after two years and deal with it a little bit more. I thought I was stronger than this," he told Reuters. "It's just a tough, tough day."

President Bill Clinton sent a letter to the family members and survivors in which he said the nation "will never forget that tragic day" and praised the courage of the people of Oklahoma City.

In the bombing's aftermath, he said, "our nation proved once again that no force of hatred or terrorism can ever defeat the American spirit."

Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, in a speech at the ceremony, said the trial would "reopen old wounds for many, but it will also mark an end. Today, we pray for justice."

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Politics to serve people

REGARDLESS OF whether there is a peace process in the Middle East or not, the fact remains that Thursday's wanton attack against *Israeli children at* Baqoura was a terrible and heinous crime that all Jordanians are ashamed of. Even if Jordan and Israel were not in a state of peace, the attack would have drawn Jordanian condemnation in the same strong tone that it indeed did from His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the government and all Jordanians. The Israelis themselves should be aware of the Jordanian stand more than anyone else; all they have to do is to remind themselves of the numerous incidents when Israeli schoolboys wandered into Jordanian territory to visit Petra over the years *but were simply picked up and sent back across* the border without even being questioned.

In the context of the Baqoura incident, quite simply no sane person on earth could accept an armed attack against innocent children, whether Israeli, Arab or otherwise.

Jordan's record speaks for itself. And it is in this spirit that we have to reject the criticism levelled yesterday by Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, who lamented what he saw as Jordan's failure to condemn the 1996 Israeli missile attack on Qana in the same strong tones as the Kingdom denounced the Baqoura incident. Does Mr. Hrawi *not remember or choose to ignore the* fact that Jordan had voiced grave sorrow and its sense of sharing Lebanon's grief at that time? Perhaps the Lebanese leader has forgotten that it was his government and authorities who had turned down a Jordanian initiative to send the prime minister, Abdul Karim Kabariti, to Beirut in a show of solidarity with the Lebanese people who were then still under an Israeli blitz.

The history of the Arab World is plentiful of instances when Jordan shouldered more than its share whenever it came to humanitarian causes. This country does not make any apologies for its *principles; nor does it seek praise and applause* for its stands. It is Jordan's way of life and its people will continue to live by it.

Let no one overlook that Jordan's approach to humanitarian issues remains far above all political considerations, whether in the Arab context or otherwise. It is a principle that the Kingdom has adopted and long believed in. When it comes to issues that concern human life, politics should be at the service of such concerns.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for **Al Ra'i** Saturday expressed the view that the Jordanian soldier who shot and killed the Israeli schoolgirls in Baqoura must be mentally deranged and unstable because he has committed a crime which is *bound to benefit Israel and harm Jordan's interests.* That soldier's actions, said Fahed Fanek, has helped Benyamin Netanyahu to extricate himself from the present crisis which resulted from the world community's condemnation of Israel's plans to build a Jewish settlement in east Jerusalem's lands. By killing the innocent children, said the writer, the Jordanian soldier helped shift the world's attention from Israel's illegal measures, which were denounced by the U.N. General Assembly, to the victims of the shooting incident, thus enabling Israel to win world sympathy and shift the focus of world attention from the Israeli practices against the Palestinians and their lands to the border incident. The attacker who shot and killed the girls brought shame to the Jordanian Armed Forces, known *for their discipline, and to the Kingdom which is* known for its hospitality and excellent treatment of guests, continued the writer. He said that the attacker has committed an action similar to those deranged Israeli soldiers who committee crimes against Palestinian civilians in Hebron and other parts of Palestine over the past decades, but, he said, it has been proved that terrorist acts usually backfire and achieve just the opposite of the desired ends.

A WRITER for **Al Ra'i** called on Arab countries to respond to a call by Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh for lifting the sanctions imposed on Iraq for its invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and said that the Iraqis are continuing to suffer as long as they remain hostage to Rolf Ekeus and his team. Badri Mulki said the question of saving Iraq and its people from injustice is more important than the peace process and the Arab countries' drive to normalise relations with Israel and more important than current Arab states' drive to persuade Mr. Netanyahu to comply with the requirements of genuine peace. The Yemeni president's call should be heeded by the other Arab leaders who have to convene in a summit meeting, with the question of lifting the embargo on Iraq the only item on their agenda, urged *the writer. He said the Iraqis will continue to face suf*ferings if their brothers and sisters in the Arab states fail to end the sanctions and provide Iraq with all its needs to resume normal life. The writer said Mr. Ekeus and his inspection teams who search for Iraq's weapons will continue to find excuses to perpetuate the sanctions which, he said, serve the interests of certain world powers which back Israel's measures in the occupied Arab lands.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Global market — the mark of the 21st century

PERHAPS THE twenty first century, extending to the year 2100, is too long to lend itself to meaningful futuristic predictions. Therefore, it is more realistic to confine ourselves to the first decade of the coming century i.e., the ten years ending in 2010.

Many problems we lived with in the past decade or two will continue to be with us in the next decade, such as the Israeli challenge, Arab fragmentation, widespread poverty, high rate of unemployment, loose public administration, heavy external indebtedness, unsettled national identity, upgrading democracy and others.

The new, salient phenomenon expected to take place and lead to radical changes in our economy and social life is the full integration in the global market, which calls for extensive preparations and will necessitate many economic and social adjustments.

The global market is not selective: we either take it or leave it as a whole, with all the positive and negative consequences that come with it, thus accepting the rewards and meeting the costs. If we do not join the global market, we are condemned to isolation and stagnation, something I call Somalisation.

Joining the global market in a big way will begin within a year or two. The starting point is signing the partnership with the European Union, on the one hand, and joining the World Trade Organisation (WTO), on the other. By taking these two big steps we shall enjoy unlimited opportunities, but we shall, at the same time, be exposed to great challenges. We either pass the test and become a South-western Asian tiger or fail and get crushed under the feet of the successful players.

The global market has no mercy or safety nets for the unfit. Fortunately, the world appreciates our difficult circumstances and vulnerable position, and will lend us a helping hand during a temporary transitional period. The world markets will open up for our exports with immediate effect, while we shall be required to open up our markets gradually, over several years of transitional period, which will give our previously protected industries some breathing time to adapt themselves to the new environment and stand up to the new competition.

We have no other alternative but to take the risk. Ninety per cent of the world, including all advanced countries, are already on board, forming an open market on reciprocal basis. It is beyond reason to hesitate and be left with the minority of poor and backward countries sitting on the sidelines. The outcasts are looked upon in pity. They live off the hand-outs of the advanced world. Jordan made up its mind to join the world.

After joining the European and world markets, no one will tell us anymore that the Jordanian market is too small for big and feasible industries. Investors, be they Jordanians, Arabs or foreigners, will have access to the markets of Europe and the whole world. After that, everything depends on efficiency and competitiveness. We have to adopt the latest technologies and use the best methods of management, financing and marketing in order to survive.

Those among us who oppose the global market are exactly those who opposed the concept of market economy itself. They cannot imagine a world which is not controlled by some central power. Even the huge American, Japanese or German national economies will have no alternative but to submit to the absolute authority and logic of the global market and respond to its forces.

All great empires known in the history tried to unify the world under their control. With time, they all failed, faded away and fell. The global market is the sweeping power which will unify the world and might be the final stage in the long history of trade developments or the end of the history of economy.

'Jerusalem has been lost under Israel's frantic building projects'

By Dr. A. Clare Brandabur

HAVING JUST visited Jerusalem, I would like to warn all those who plan to visit the Holy City for Easter: you may not recognise the place. The old pictures of the fabulous city whose crenellated walls, church spires and golden dome once crowned rolling forested hills where shepherds tended their flocks no longer reflect the reality.

Today Jerusalem looks like a mad deconstruction zone, with cranes and bulldozers doing the work usually allotted to tanks and bombs. The red stony earth of Palestine is lacerated by dozens of new roads cut into the hillsides like trenches in a battlefield.

The Jewish neighbourhoods that all but choke the city of Jerusalem (the single exception in the noose — Jabal Abu Ghneim where Netanyahu has vowed to build 6,500 new Jewish homes) look like accretions from another planet. The menacing high-rise monoliths of French Hill, with their windowless sides facing Arab neighbours, the rows of Swiss chalets in monotonous phalanx swarming over the hills like the malignant spores of some noxious fungus, whole tops of mountains cut away raw, eaten up by frantic new fortress-like settlements, all on stolen land, all illegal.

Desmond Stewart remarked in "Palestinians: Victims of Expediency" that the Arab villages between Nablus and Ramallah grow out of the surrounding countryside like hair out of a beautiful healthy head, while the Jewish settlements look like "the false eyelashes of a transvestite spy."

Three years ago, Samir Odeh, a leader of the Palestinian community in Chicago, brought his two children to visit their grandmother in her East Jerusalem home. The morning after their arrival he sent the children out to the garden to smell the "sweet air of Palestine". When he did not follow them, they came back inside the house to find their father dying of a massive coronary. Turned away from the closest (Jewish) hospital, Samir died before he could receive treatment. At least this exiled Palestinian had the consolation of being buried in his homeland. But I am not original in saying that the Jerusalem he saw, even three years ago, broke his heart. And it is much uglier today.

Now Netanyahu, eager to cover up his crimes, has sealed up four Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem, among them the office of the Palestine Human Rights Information Centre, whose staff has tirelessly documented the assassinations, land confiscations, evictions, house demolitions, torture, practised by the Israelis against the indigenous people of Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine. Having worked with the Chicago branch of this organisation, I know the hardships they faced. Their field workers were arrested and beaten, funding is scarce, yet they struggle on.

I am sorry to say that members of the Arab community, in the U.S. and elsewhere, have failed to appreciate the work of this fine, professional human rights centre, and therefore failed to contribute the funding which would have enabled the centre to disseminate the information its members so arduously gather and whose work is more essential now than ever.

As an American, I am furious that U.S. taxpayers are funding this Israeli outrage and giving it their moral support. The statements of President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and White House Spokesman Nicholas Burns are weak: the settlements are "not helpful". Really! The U.S. veto of the mildly worded Security Council resolution condemning Israel for this final assault against Arab Jerusalem is a source of shame to any American who has seen, first hand, the terrible suffering, the gross injustice caused by this mistaken policy.

Americans must come to realise that among the noble projects their billions support are Israeli death squads, like that which attacked the village of Hizmeh just north of Jerusalem on Feb. 25. Dressed like Arabs, armed Israeli soldiers from what Israeli TV said was a "crack undercover unit known as "Duvdevan" or "Cherry" entered the house of a Palestinian whom they began to interrogate. When he screamed from their beatings and torture, a neighbour, Mohammed Abdul Aziz Abu Halui, 55, intervened to help the victim. Halui died after being shot, beaten and strangled; three others were wounded when the undercover Israelis opened fire on Palestinians who gathered to repel the attack. Then an Israeli army jeep arrived and whisked the perpetrators away.

In Guatemala they are called them death squads. In South Africa they are called death squads. It is time we called them death squads in Palestine as well and face the fact that this is what our money is paying for in the "peace process."

And if it is sad now that the beautiful city of Jerusalem has been lost under the frantic building projects of an Israeli state bent on eradicating its Arab, Muslim and Christian identity, there is worse to come. The same Jewish fanatics whose jealousy of the cultural heritage of Christianity and Islam now fuels this building programme have an agenda which calls for the ultimate destruction of both the great mosques, Al Aqsa and Dome of the Rock, and the Holy Sepulchre Church, as well as all the other churches. I have seen maps of the Holy City which shows all these non-Jewish holy places gone and in their place a future Temple of Solomon. This in spite of the consensus among archaeologists that Solomon's Temple was never located on the Haram Al Sharif — many believe it was not even in Jerusalem. But these zealots are determined to destroy the buildings sacred to others in order to assert exclusive domain over Jerusalem. Who is to stop them?

The writer is on the staff of the English Department at Al Isra University, Amman. She contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Globalisation — fine for some and bad for many

By John Cavanagh

WASHINGTON — An impression prevails that despite some problems with inequalities and turmoil, free trade is the major unifying force offering opportunity to working and poor people around the world.

But a growing body of evidence from researchers in many countries shows the devastating results of the free trade orthodoxy currently in favour among most governments.

The rise in inequality. A recent series of Washington Post articles acknowledges that free trade increases the gap between those who are part of the new global work force and those left out, but it suggests that globalisation is lifting millions out of poverty. However, the gap is important.

Researchers at the Institute for Policy Studies calculate that the combined wealth of the world's 447 billionaires is greater than the income of the poorest half of the world's people.

By our calculation, at least two-thirds of the new investment into the developing world goes to China and nine other rapidly growing countries. A new global economic apartheid of 24-richer countries, a dozen rapidly growing developing countries and 140 that are growing slowly or not at all become one of the major new threats to global security.

Dwindling jobs and wages. The series begins with a tour of a clean Philippine factory owned by a jeans company, where workers are relatively well paid. The article implies that a sizeable share of Third World workers are entering this phase.

But the article fails to mention the rampant subcontracting of clothing and footwear to people's homes, where child labour is not uncommon, or the terrible living conditions that accompany many of the factory jobs.

The world's top 200 corporations now have sales equivalent to 28 per cent of the world's measured economic activity, but they employ well under 1 per cent of the world's workers.

"In country after country, policies are adapted to serve the needs of global firms, often undermining stable communities, clean environments and dignified jobs. As corporate contributions become the determining factor in elections the world over, governments' ability to serve the needs of their people diminishes."

In addition, workers in most of the Third World's new global factories are denied basic rights to organise and strike. In the United States, companies use the threat of moving production to China or Mexico to bargain down wages and benefits.

Casino economies. One of the pillars of the most recent wave of economic globalisation has been pressure from the U.S. government, the World Bank and other global agencies, on poorer governments to open up their stock and financial markets to foreign capital. While offering new profit opportunities to the global investing elite of the world, these measures are turning Third World economies into casinos vulnerable to the whims of the twenty-somethings who manage the world's mutual and other investment funds.

Environmental plunder. The Post's series applauds the growth strategies of China, Chile, Indonesia and the Philippines, but fails to mention that in each of these countries "development" has been centred on some combination of tearing down forests, over fishing, rapid depletion of minerals and poisoning of land by agri-chemicals.

The long-term costs of this brand of growth are not factored into the various measures of success, yet the next generations in these countries will spend much of their energy coping with erosion, depleted fishing banks and increasingly unproductive soil.

Community collapse. The series equates progress with poor people landing jobs in global factories, entering the cash economy and purchasing that first television set. The first article juxtaposes a poor fishing family in the Philippines with another where the daughters' factory income has opened to the family the wonders of the country's sparkling new malls.

No doubt economic globalisation has offered this path to millions of people. Yet many of the rural communities that are bypassed or undermined by globalisation were well-functioning social units where hundreds of millions of subsistence farmers and fisher folk have earned a livelihood for decades. While poor in terms of cash income, these communities often score high in terms of nutrition, social peace and even education.

A few people land jobs in the large corporate fishing fleets and agribusiness firms that are the engines of globalisation, but many more join the ranks of the hungry unemployed. In this sense, globalisation is destroying viable rural communities.

Democracy in danger. In country after country, policies are adapted to serve the needs of global firms, often undermining stable communities, clean environments and dignified jobs. As corporate contributions become the determining factor in elections the world over, governments' ability to serve the needs of their people diminishes.

The Clinton administration is launching a new spate of initiatives to expand free trade around the world. These will be opposed by a growing international network of organisations of workers, environmentalists, farmers and women. A growing body of evidence suggests that the current route to economic globalisation is not working for most of humanity.

The writer is co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies, a leftist think tank. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

LETTERS

'Our business is clean'

To the Editor:

FRIDRICK STEIN, from Germany, wrote a letter "Clean business needed" (Jordan Times, March 1, 1997) complaining about the lack of good manners, proficiency in foreign languages and tidy appearance of tour guides and drivers. As a result, he said he was not going to send tourists to Jordan but to Israel instead.

I am writing this letter because I find it to be my duty and because I love my country. I am an English-speaking Jordanian tourist guide. I have studied ancient history at the university in England and I took the guiding course at Jordan University; I have been working with tourists for 10 years.

All guides in Jordan have been trained and chosen for the job by the Ministry of Tourism. The guide is his country's ambassador and the tourists can see the country through his eyes, his knowledge and his love for his country. We were taught how to be proud and how to build good relations with our visitors; we were taught to show them our rich country — rich in archaeological treasures, in tradition and in religious heritage.

The tourist guide represents the host country and he (or she) may be the only close, friendly personal contact that visitors might make.

Most of the tourists who come to Jordan are well educated and many of them wrote books about the Kingdom and about the friendliness, the warmth and the honesty of its people.

As far as my experience with drivers in Jordan has shown me, they are very friendly, experienced and safe and they have been tested and chosen for their job by experienced companies like JETT, Alfa and Petra. They are clean and the uniform they wear is a pilot uniform.

Guides and drivers have thousands of good reports sent to their travel agencies by tourists and professors. They cannot rule the tourists and impose drastic control over their moves because all groups that come to Jordan do so through travel agencies and have a complete programme to follow.

So I wonder, aren't there better ways to get cheaper offers than by accusing guides and drivers?

Basem Sabatini,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

هكذا من الأصل

Society on the Move

Information highway makes communication headway

As one of his last decisions as prime minister, Abdul Karim Kabariti, in his Tuesday evening Cabinet meeting, appointed Mohammad Amin secretary general of the Ministry of Information. Mr. Amin, who has served in the public information sector throughout his career and who was recently publicly applauded by His Majesty King Hussein for his sleuth spirit in reporting on bureaucratic red tape, fraud and corruption in the 70s, had been acting secretary general at the ministry. Not to confuse the issue of ministry movement, we must report that former Secretary General Nayef Mawla, who returned to Jordan in January from a six-month special assignment working for Bahraini Crown Prince Hamad Ben Issa Al Khalifeh, was appointed as an advisor at the prime ministry more than a week ago. It should be noted again that the ministry had been slated for phase-out as part of the intended sweeping moves to open up the government under the Kabariti tenure. That measure, may yet come since the minister who took over the ministry in last night's reshuffle, Dr. Sumir Mutawi, is now called minister of state for information affairs rather than minister of information. Incidentally, there was a rumour last night that the former minister, Dr. Marwan Muasher, is now slated to become ambassador to Washington following the appointment of Dr. Fayez Tarawneh as foreign minister.

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THE MILD MANNERED: *Other appointments which were announced, before the news of a change of government, affected envoys at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Those assignments brought a new realm of responsibilities to Ambassadors Yassin Istanbuli and Fuad Batayneh. For Mr. Istanbuli, 60, it means a non-resident representation to Bangladesh from his current post as ambassador to Pakistan. The envoy was ambassador to Tehran from 1992 to 1994. During that tenure, he escaped a harrowing experience when bandits stormed his residence. No one was hurt in the incident, but the furniture was stolen. Mr. Istanbuli served as ambassador to Algeria from 1980-85, and to Romania from 1987 to 1991, and thus witnessed the revolution which brought down the socialist government of Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989. Prior to that appointment he was director of the foreign ministry's Political Department for two years. Mr. Istanbuli, who has a bachelors degree in history from Damascus University, is a recipient of Jordan's Istiklal Medal of the First Order. As for Mr. Batayneh, 50, a career diplomat, his new foreign appointment is his first as an ambassador. He heads for Yemen, where he succeeds Ambassador Fayez Rabi'e who returned to Amman last year and retired from the foreign service. Mr. Batayneh served in Belgrade, Chile, Beirut, and Bahrain. He was twice appointed to Jordan's Mission to the United Nations where on the second tour he was deputy permanent representative. A 1970 graduate of Baghdad University with a bachelors degree in political and economic sciences, Mr. Batayneh leaves his position as director of the foreign ministry's Special Bureau, and heads for the Yemen Republic next week.*

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AN FO FLOCK: *The Information Department at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London began a two-day conference yesterday for all press and public affairs officers at British embassies in the Middle East region. The event is being attended by 41 delegates from regional countries as well as from the Foreign Office (FO). The conference will discuss Britain's public diplomacy effort and will focus on topics relevant to the region such as Islam and the West, the Middle East peace process and the use of information technology as a public diplomacy tool. Participants will also discuss the perceptions in the region of British policy. In Amman for the event are, from the Foreign Office, John Shepherd, head of the Middle East Command at the FO, and, from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Gamon McLellan, director of BBC World Service Arabic Service, and Hassan Muawad, the Arabic Service's political editor. During Wednesday's session the embassy staff demonstrated new communications technology at work by linking up the embassy's Net site and contacting HRH Crown Prince Hassan, who speedily logged on to have an interchange with participants to the conference. The conference, the second such event (the last one was held in Cairo in 1993), was to host Jordanian guest speakers at the the two scheduled luncheons. Yesterday, former Minister of Information Dr. Jawad Anani spoke, even though he was well aware that the Cabinet change would likely take place the same day and that he was tipped for a portfolio, embassy sources were proud to tell us. At today's lunch it is Al Dustour Chief Editor Dr. Nabil Sharif who is to give a talk. Deputy Chief of Mission at the British Embassy Simon Collis hosted a reception at his home for the group and several guests including many Jordanian journalists. Taking the opportunity of his stay in Amman, Mr. Shepherd, accompanied by Ambassador Peter Hinchcliffe, visited the Crown Prince to talk about regional issues and particularly the proposed Organisation for Cooperation and Security in the Middle East (OCSME) which both Prince Hassan and British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind are keen to see established.*

His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan confer with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali during Wednesday's swearing in ceremony of the new Cabinet (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

HRH Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday meets with visiting Head of the Middle East Command at the British Foreign Office John Shepherd (photo by Boghos)

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ETHNIC LITERATI: *Arab-American professor of literature Lisa Majaj, of the University of Michigan, is scheduled to visit Jordan and present several public lectures at Jordanian institutions on Arab-American literature, the politics of memory, and Arab-American women's literature. Three lectures have been scheduled as follows: March 31 at Yarmouk University on the topic of Arab-American literature and the politics of memory; April 1, first at the Jordan University for Women on the subject of women's writing in Arab-American Literature, and then the same afternoon at the University of Jordan's English Department on the same topic as the Yarmouk University lecture. Prof. Majaj, whose roots are Palestinian, will also be interviewed by the press. Her lecture tour in Jordan is being arranged by the U.S. Information Service which last year hosted guest lectures by another Arab-American author, Diana Abu Jaber, who was in Jordan working on a new novel.*

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CORNERING COLUMNISTS: *Before even making its April newsstand debut, Al Arab Al Yom (Arabs Today), the ambitious new Arabic daily project of publisher Riad Hroub, has stirred one former chief editor out from semi-retirement and another writer to shift paper alliances. As Al Arab Al Yom's partial list of names slated to make up its editorial staff contains three columnists from Al Dustour daily, the second largest circulating daily wasted little time in replacing thus far two of those three. The evidence appeared with the writings of Rakan Majali and Bassim Sakijah in last week's Al Dustour. Mr. Majali, who was Al Ra'i chief editor during Zeid Rifai's last tenure as prime minister and was once president of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) puts his pen to paper at Al Dustour on a daily basis on topics, he said, range from political issues and local problems to human interest stories. In his free time over the past years, Mr. Majali had been doing much reading and tending to his personal life. But he says that he has been approached several times in the last five to six years by Al Dustour editors to come on board as a regular columnist. Mr. Majali said he was not terribly interested at the time as he had been away from writing for a while, but the persuasiveness of former colleagues and friends finally made the difference.*

Bassim Sakijah may be more familiar to some because he has been writing for various papers in Jordan such as Al Nida and Al Safir. He also will be writing for Al Mithaq, a paper scheduled to go on sale next week and published by Nahed Hattar, who is currently standing trial for lèse majesté. Mr. Sakijah was once a contributor to the London-based Al Quds Al Arabi. The former chief editor of the now defunct Akher Khaber Arabic daily, he ran unsuccessfully last July for the post of president of the Jordanian Press Association (JPA). In one of his first columns in Al Dustour last week he wrote about "a new Jordan," and said the country was entering an era of change, but what sort of change and what form it would take is yet unknown, as are the politicians who will take charge of this change. Mr. Sakijah, added that all of this was happening at a time "when form is taking precedence over content and when politics take precedence over policies." He claimed that events last year were significant, but they made Jordanians more convinced that those who were leading the change were not qualified to do so. "Perhaps they themselves are the reason why change is not coming," he wrote. Mr. Sakijah, who may have something new to write, in hindsight, also says he was approached by Al Dustour to join their op-ed team about seven month ago. The offer, he said, was reinstated again last week.

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OF DESIGN & DESIGNERS: *Housing and Urban Development Corporation Director Yousef Hiyasat has announced the opening of the annual competition in architecture, sponsored by the League of Arab States Council of Ministers of Housing. The awards are presented on different years either for a completed architectural project itself, or to an architect. Those nominated to compete must fulfil rigid criteria. The award is a cash prize of around $10,000. This year the panel of judges includes a Jordanian architect, Ziad Hayat. The judges convene in July to study all the nominations, and the award is presented at the November meeting of the council of housing ministers in Cairo. Jordan has, as yet, not won in this competition. Maybe this will be our year.*

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THEY AIM TO PLEASE: *Here we follow up on a letter to editor (J.T., March 15, 1996) written by social studies teacher Muna Shami wherein she wrote of her dismay in dealing with an Amman (Marka) Airport telephone operator. Quick to get to the bottom of things, three officials from Jordan's airline industry called the Jordan Times so that they could contact Ms. Shami and hear first-hand from her about the incident. Currently looking into the matter are Public Relations Chief (inspector) Munib Toukan, Awni Shalash from Royal Jordanian's Management Control Department, Ibrahim Ramadan, director of Amman Airport, and Ahed Quntar, general manager of Royal Wings. Should their investigations succeed, Ms Shami may yet get a form of restitution, but at the very least her plaint was respected.*

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COSTUMES ON PARADE: *The United Nations Women's Guild is holding a fund-raising national costumes show at the InterContinental Hotel this evening at 5:00 P.M. The event, to be held under the patronage of HRH Princess Zein Bint Al Hussein, who has been put in charge of Al Hussein Welfare Institute, is open to the public with tickets on sale at the door to the hotel's Grand Ballroom. Proceeds will go to three or four charitable institutions in the Kingdom as has been the custom for several years. Guild President Nilofar Rahman says the two main goals of this non-profit organisation made up of women employees of the U.N. as well as spouses of U.N. staff, is to help new members adjust to their new posts and to organise charity events to support needy children in the host country. Mrs. Rahman is married to Farid Rahman, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) regional director for the Middle East and North Africa. This is the Rahmans second tour of duty in Jordan. The couple, who come from Pakistan, were here from 1987 to 1989 when Mr. Rahman was deputy regional director of UNICEF. Mrs. Rahman has often worked in fund-raising in all her husband's foreign posts. She said that last year the guild was able to raise JD 4,600 between its monthly meetings, the Ramadan iftar it hosts and the national costumes show. Of that amount, JD 4,025 was distributed to different charitable associations. Some of the guild's other activities include participation in various bazaars such as the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development event held last October from which funds raised went to benefit the Um Al Hussein Orphanage. The guild is hoping for a large turnout to this evening's show.*

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TOP AD MAN: *Al Ra'i now has an able advertising manager, somebody who also speaks English, to help those interested in placing advertisements in Jordan's largest circulating daily to date. He, not surprisingly, was swiped from the J.T. advertising department to be made head of Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times ads. No small responsibility when particularly Al Ra'i ads are the mainstay of both our paper and our Arabic sister.*

Jennifer Hamarneh

Japanese men put beauty before brawn

By Miwa Suzuki
Agence France Presse

TOKYO — A classified ad-vertisement in a Japanese friends-wanted magazine sought women to "exchange tips on becoming more beautiful" — the person who placed the ad was a man.

While he may be consi-dered the extreme, a whole industry has sprung up in Japan catering to male vanity with the young and old inc-reasingly obsessed with how they look.

There are men-only beauty parlours, make-up classes, cosmetic lines and designer underwear to restore shape to sagging buttocks and contain spreading waistlines.

Shape-up house, an Osaka-based beauty parlour operator, opened its first men-only Dandy House in Tokyo in September 1995 and now has six such outlets to meet growing demand for its services.

"Men in their 20s and 40s are our customers," said Ta-kako Nakano, the 27-year-old manager of Dandy House in Shinjuku, central Tokyo, with membership growing at the rate of 30-to-50 a month.

Charges depend on type of service and how long it takes, but Nakanao said customers spend on average 500,000 yen ($4,160) for three months of pampering, with the most popular services be-ing hair removal and weight-reducing massage.

A 24-year-old man said he had spent two million yen so far on depilation and facials.

"I started with depilation to get rid of my facial hair in November and I also want to get rid of chest hair," said the man, who asked not to be named.

"It pleases me to see my beard becoming thin. It is a nuisance to shave every day, and I don't like black traces of hair on my face."

Ryo Kurokawa, a 27-year-old public servant, joined Dandy House in February and has spent 400,000 yen keeping himself in good shape.

"I was shocked to see fat around my waist one day," Kuokawa said.

"My body in the mirror was ugly," he said, adding that he "feels good" after he has a massage.

"I have no problem going to a beauty parlour. Many of my friends have facials."

Dandy House also sells a line of men's cosmetics, named Miss Paris, which includes a 35-gramme bottle of skin cream for 20,000 yen and a 100-millilitre bottle of skin lotion for 8,000 yen.

Japan's top cosmetics ma-ker Shiseido Co. Ltd. has got in on the act, too, launching its Geraid line in late 1996. It estimates the men's cosmetics market has grown 70 per cent in the last 10 years to more than 200 billion yen.

One Shiseido product has been an extremely hot item, a 1,500-yen "eyebrow designing kit" for men that includes a tiny comb, scissors, tweezers and an eyebrow pencil, posting twice the sales the company had expected.

A survey done by Shiseido before the launch of the eyebrow product found that the second wave of baby boo-mers, born between 1971 and 1974, "have a strong tendency towards narcissism."

In the survey of 157 men in their early 20s, 57.6 per cent said the main purpose of wanting to look beautiful was for personal satisfaction, far higher than the 16.0 per cent who said they wanted to attract girls.

Shiseido concluded that the ideal among the surveyed young men was for "a wild ap-pearance and a beautiful body."

The survey showed that 65.0 per cent had dyed their hair, 42.7 per cent had long hair, 24.2 per cent had a pierced ear, and 11.5 per cent cultivated a suntan in their pursuit of the "wild."

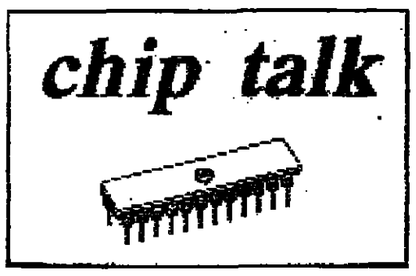
But far from being an obsession of the young, their fathers also worry about appearances, said a marketing official at Fuji Spinning Co. Ltd.

Sales of the company's "shape-up underwear" for men, introduced two years ago, posted a four-fold year-on-year jump last year.

"Sales first grew among young men and spread unexpectedly to the older generation worried about fat bellies and falling buttocks," Fuji Spinning's Hiroaki Matsuo said.

The byte doctors

By Jean-Claude Elias



COMPUTER PROFESSIONALS, especially those whose job is to provide technical service and assistance, have always liked to be compared, or to compare themselves, to physicians. Many an element give them such a right — the way they respond to the urgent needs of PC users, the genuine distress in which the latter can be found when their beloved machine is out of order and the different types of "illnesses" that can affect computers, not to mention of course virus attacks.

Now computer technicians have one more reason to liken themselves to doctors. Their trade is gradually becoming a highly specialised discipline with different orientations. These days you do not just go to the doctors — you consult an ENT when you complain of a throat problem, a dentist for a tooth ache, a dermatologist for a skin disease, a cardiologist for a heart condition, etc.

Information technology, even at the level of personal computing, is becoming highly complex. A standard JD1,400 Pentium PC is not as simple as it may appear. When all goes well, it could be the easiest tool to use, but when difficulties, problems start to annoy you or failures occur, be it at software or at hardware level, a specialised professional becomes the only solution. The growing sophistication of electronics and programmes combined with the speed of change in industry standards make it impossible for just one specialist to be in good control of all elements — not in all cases anyway.

Nowadays you talk to an expert in databases, or in desktop publishing, or in networks — three different people. If you have a very specific question to ask about the Internet a "generalist" will hardly be able to give you a satisfactory answer. You need advanced training on Microsoft Excel spreadsheet programme? Only someone with in-depth knowledge of the subject can help. Another topic that requires special skills is the world of Autocad, the engineering computer-aided drawing and design system. Similarly, art and graphic design constitutes a specialty on its own. Your writeable CD-ROM is not doing what it is supposed to do? Don't expect any computer "tech" to solve your problem, this requires a highly skilled engineer.

The widespread usage of multimedia applications, the Internet, and other hi-tech products are turning computer specialists into professionals who are able to address problems, give training or answer questions in a very narrow segment of the trade. Those who have been involved in personal computing for sometime know that when pushed to the limits, the simplest question about PCs can be tricky.

Consider for instance an SVGA card, the electronic board inside a computer's cabinet that controls the screen. If you belong to the average SOHO (Small Office — Home Office) group of users then you will be happy with any new model. If on the other hand you are particularly demanding and want to get the best card for your money and for your needs, the available choices and characteristics will astound you. Apart from technical considerations, prices for an SVGA card range from JD30 to JD 600. Only a specialist in this very field can really help you select the model that would be ideal in your case.

I see the day coming when computer service providers will make sure they have a different specialist for the mouse, the floppy disk, the hard disk, the CD-ROM, the monitor, Microsoft Windows, or any other components, big or small, critical or apparently insignificant. It will certainly be the only way for them to ensure quality or professional service. An emergency entrance, in the purest hospital style, would also be a welcome addition to the facilities of these companies.

A letter from an editor

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

Dear Readers,

WE DO like to think that it is the job of newsmen and women to write about the things that cause us pain as well as the things that bring us joy. Unfortunately though, and most of the time, news items in themselves are, by default, about things that have gone wrong. What this means is that most good things go unnoticed by those who work in the media, and therefore escape the attention of the public.

A further twist has to do with writing about something once or discussing it just once in a society where many people do not really read the papers that are made available to them. You also tend to find out that even those who do read what other people write rarely consider responding to or taking action in response to that which they had just read.

One of those things that we have been advocating has been the initiation of a debate on the decision-making process in our city. What we mean by this is that if somebody were to have a vision of a tunnel or a tower, or whatever, and in any part of our cities, the next logical step should be to hold public enquiries to determine whether such a project is what a city actually needs at that given moment in time.

This way, the decision regarding any grand construction project is brought closer to the very society it was intended for in the first place.

Another thing has to do with the accumulating file on the ever-increasing cases of licence-abuse that seem to take place in so many of the night-spots in and around our capital.

It remains known, although not acknowledged, that some of these spots act not only as a platform for serving alcohol to under 18-year-old kids but also as places for illicit occurrings.

At the end of the day, are we prepared to do anything about this?

Alas, the general feeling of apathy that has permeated into so many aspects of our lives prevents us from attempting anything short of slamming a ship where similar things happen.

The important thing to point out here is that more important than a ship anchored off-shore away from the greatest bulk of the Jordanian society, is the apparent lack of interest in our media — again we are at fault here — to pay enough attention to what happens on our home front in terms of news and events, hopes, concerns, and fears.

This brings us to the next item.

While some newspapers abroad devote three times the space they devote to foreign news to cover events taking place at home, our own newspapers, and TV news coverage, constantly show more interest in the grit of what goes on overseas than in what actually goes on at home. The end result of this has been that home news has been gradually reduced to a series of scandals and gossips.

Again, would we be prepared to do anything about this? Are we ready for action? Reality tells us that we lack the skill to conduct such campaigns effectively.

One aspect that has to do with the home front is the continued overlooking of the ever-increasing crimes of honour that we have come to witness especially now that our society is opening up to foreign ideas and influences.

What is even more agonising is that those involved in social welfare, women's affairs, and community development do not even feel obliged to react to such serious crimes.

How long will it be before we cry out to acknowledge that a father bashing his own daughter's head is not an acceptable behaviour, ever, and especially now in 1997?

More questions to follow, dear readers.

Can we be expected to overlook what is a generally known — but as yet unacknowledged — fact that electioneering has unfortunately taken the form of buying votes for the upcoming elections by means of handing out slipply coupons to those members of the electorate who thus far have none?

Again, should traffic policemen and women not waste their time by hiding behind a lonely bush waiting to trap unsuspecting drivers and turn their attention to the more worthy task of rebuking these reckless drivers who drive at a very slow pace in the fast lane thereby jeopardising their own lives and the lives of others in the process?

Another issue involves those tour guides writing letters to editors telling just how well behaved and well mannered all guides, and the accompanying bus drivers, are when in the company of foreign tourists.

To this, I can add a personal experience I had with a tour guide who did his utmost to rip me and my foreign friends off, while the well-mannered driver was all too willing to show off his driving skills with only his bare feet on the steering wheel.

I leave you to draw your own conclusions on this one.

Sincerely yours

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, March 20, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:08	Ovide & The Gang
2:30	Raw Toonage
2:45	Curiosity Show
3:00	They Came From Outer Space
4:00	N.B.A. Basketball
5:00	Out Of This World
5:30	French Programmes
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Parenthood
8:00	Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:30	The American Chart Show
9:10	Kung Fu-The Legend Continues
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — Big Dreams & Broken Hearts Starring: Kenny Rogers & Michele Lee
12:00	Taratata

Friday, March 21, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	The Mask
2:30	Flintstones
3:00	See How They Grow
3:15	French Programme
4:00	Crystal Maze
5:00	News Flash
5:01	Science & Space Encyclopedia
5:30	French Programmes
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	America's Funniest Home Videos
8:00	The Health Show
8:30	Hawkeye
9:10	Frontline (Doc.)
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — A Mother's Gift Starring: Nancy McKoen & Adrian Pasdar

Saturday, March 22, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Adventures of Mickey & Donald
2:30	Moomins (Cartoon)
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Gillette (Sports)
4:30	Innovation (Doc.)
5:00	Tilt 23.5
5:25	Blue Heelers
6:00	French Programme
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Hanging With Mr. Cooper
8:00	Magazine - 01 (Doc.)
8:30	Prism
9:10	Time Trax
10:00	News In English
10:25	MacGyver
11:00	Feature Film — Forbidden Night Starring: Melissa Gilbert & Robin Shou

Sunday, March 23, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:08	Jonny Quest (Cartoon)
2:30	Problem Child (Cartoon)
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Global Family (Doc.)
4:25	Energy Express
4:50	Our World, Their World
5:15	All Our Children
6:00	French Programmes
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
8:00	World Echo (Doc.)
8:30	Side Effects
9:10	Tycoons (Doc.)
10:00	News In English
10:25	Hot Shots
11:15	Sisters

Monday, March 24, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:05	Flintstones
2:30	Captain Planet
3:00	French Programmes
4:00	Nature's Inventions
4:25	Deep Water Haven
4:50	Night Of the Red Hunter
5:00	Extra Dimensions (Doc.)
6:00	French Programmes
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	One Foot In The Crave
8:00	Discover Magazine (Doc.)
8:30	Murder She Wrote
9:10	Highlander
10:00	News In English
10:25	Under Suspicion
11:00	Midile March

Tuesday, March 25, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:08	Budgie — The Little Helicopter
2:30	Grimmy
3:00	French Programmes
4:00	Super Sport Follies
4:30	Dog House
5:00	Preserving For The Taste Of It
5:15	Album Show
6:00	French Programme
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	The Office
8:00	Superstars Of Action
8:30	Encounter
9:10	The Nature of Things
10:00	News In English
10:25	Snowy River
12:00	Mission Impossible

Wednesday, March 26, 1997

2:00	Holy Koran
2:08	Flintstones
2:30	Adventures On Rainbow Pond
3:00	French Programme
4:00	America's Funniest People
4:25	Escape from Jupiter (Space drama for children)
4:50	Challenge (Doc.)
5:15	Border Town
6:00	French Programmes
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Grace Under Fire
8:00	Soldier's Diary
8:30	Challenges
9:10	Spencer For Hire
10:00	News In English
10:25	Cobra
11:00	Hart To Hart

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shuqair

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

** I've no right to ask you.
La yahiq lee an as'alak.

** Don't make a round on me.
La takhdani.

** Don't get on my way.
La Taqiff fee sabeeli.

** Don't ruffle my feelings.
La todayeqni.

** It isn't secret anymore.
Lam ya'od sirran.

** Don't break squares.
La takh'ruj anil'ma'loof.

* * * *

PUZZLES

(A) WHICH COUNTRY?

Which countries do these girls come from?

* * *

(B) POULTRY:

A POULTERER bought one turkey, two geese, and three ducks for £4. The two geese and three ducks were together worth three turkeys and the three ducks cost the same as the two geese.

How much did each bird cost?

* * * *

JOKES

• WIFE: "Let's get downstairs to see the thief."

HUSBAND: "I suggest you first do that. I think it's absolutely unfair that two fight against one!"

* * *

• "WHENEVER I look at the mirror I imagine I were a moon. Do you think this is 'vanity', too?" the husband wanted to know.

"No, I call it 'blindness,'" replied the wife.

* * *

• HE: "What will you do if someone tries to kiss you?"

SHE: "I scream and ask for help."

HE: "Suppose I attempted to do that myself."

SHE: "What a pity! I've got a hoarse voice."

* * * *

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Where could you see a sbirro?
2. Define (a) francolin (b) frangible (c) franklin
3. What colour is coquelicot?
4. Muscardine is fatal to..... what?
5. Can you say which source lanolin is extracted?

* * * *

HEALTH FILE

5 WAYS TO TREAT BRUISES

* For severe swelling, apply a cold compress-crushed ice cubes in a towel or a packet of frozen peas will do.

* If possible, keep the bruised limb raised on a footstool or arm rest.

* Mix two teaspoons of grapeseed oil with five drops of parsley or calendula oil and rub it gently into the bruise.

* The homeopathic remedy Arnica lotion may help.

* If you bruise easily, avoid stimulants like tea and coffee and strengthen your blood vessels by eating foods rich in vitamin C and bioflavinoids, like citrus and green vegetables.

Four Weddings spurned lover finds academy approval in English Patient

By Bob Thomas
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — In Four Weddings And A Funeral she was the cool beauty who was rejected by Hugh Grant. In The English Patient she lures Ralph Fiennes into a steamy affair.

Four Weddings won Kristin Scott Thomas international recognition and a role opposite Hollywood box-office prince Tom Cruise in Mission: Impossible.

But it took the very literate and romantic The English Patient to bring her an academy nomination as best actress of 1996.

Her only concern while making The English Patient was whether enough people would see it and understand it.

"Then, when it took off like this (12 Oscar nominations), it left us all gasping," she remarked. "It's so great, the thing that we all love so much is being so well appreciated by people."

Much of the film takes place in the African desert, with Scott Thomas enduring sandstorms and trekking through the parched land. A strenuous shoot?

"Well, it was 'movie' strenuous," she said lightly. "It was a cheat desert. I was there with a hundred other people. We had telephones, we had jeeps, we weren't at all stranded.

"I'm glad that people think it must have been hard. The mechanics of it were quite complicated, and some people had to do a lot of worrying and head-scratching. And there were some serious moments, like when we got flooded.

"It's not supposed to rain in the desert. But suddenly we were swamped, and you can't walk because there's so much mud and they couldn't get trucks to the location. So overnight we had to find another location.

"But it's an actor's dream to work in the desert. Because you've got this really intense, dense silence. You can whisper to your neighbour, and he can hear everything. It's great, really great."

Born in Dorset, Scott Thomas studied drama in London and Paris, where she now lives. Unlike most English actors, Scott Thomas did not work her way through repertory.

"I really started working as a professional actress in films," she said. "When I came out of drama school, I did a couple of plays, which were sort of experimental productions. They weren't in the classic repertoire, and we did them in strange places, like fields or a church.

"So what I've learned has been in films, really. I had never made a film. I didn't know you had to do the same thing twice.

"I've been lucky enough to work with some pretty extraordinary actors in my very early days. When you're working with somebody like Judi Dench and Alan Bates, your eyes open, and you feel these things."

Her first movie in 1986, Under The Cherry Moon, was shot in France with the artist then known as Prince.

"It was a strange, strange film," she recalled. "The atmosphere was very unfilm-like. It was far more of a show than a movie. Having been given this big role in my first film, it was sort of scary. At the same time, it was exhilarating. There I was, just plunk in the middle."

Critics decried Under The Cherry Moon as the pits, and it brought the young actress little notice. She went on to earn good reviews in British television and in French as well as English films.

The popularity of Four Weddings And A Funeral alerted Hollywood to the rare beauty who could also act, and Cruise chose her for Mission: Impossible ("I loved pretending to be a spy").

In The English Patient, Scott Thomas can be seen totally nude as she joins Fiennes in a bathtub. Did doing it give her pause?

"Not really," she said. "It was just like any other scene. I was far more interested in the dying scene and not making that too melodramatic and avoiding any kind of syrup.

"The nude scene is not very nice to do. But when you watch the film, it all slots in so perfectly. It goes with the flow of the film."

Yes, she has appeared nude before — (laughing) "Most European actors have. If you haven't got your clothes off by page 3, there must be something wrong."

Britain's Kristin Scott Thomas, Academy Award nominee for best actress for her role in The English Patient poses next to a large Oscar statue at the Oscar nominees luncheon on March 11 in Beverly Hills. The Academy Awards will be presented on March 24 in Los Angeles (Reuter photo)

Long queues for short Australian films

By Kevin Morrison
Reuter

SYDNEY — The success of Australia's film industry, basking in the international spotlight after a spate of worldwide hits, has spurred Hollywood talent scouts to search down under for the next Shine or Babe.

This has been evident at Sydney's "Tropfest" Short Film Festival, which attracted representatives from Hollywood Agency William Morris and the Cannes Film Festival for the first time.

The festival has drawn big-name judges, too. This year's included George Miller, the producer of box-office hit Babe, while actress Nicole Kidman and Portrait Of A Lady director Jane Campion were judges last year.

Oscar-nominated Geoffrey Rush was to attend but went to Los Angeles to collect his Screen Actors' Guild Award for best actor in Shine, said John Polson, Tropfest's founder and director.

Now seen as the nation's premier short-film festival and a talent pool of filmmakers, the first Tropfest four years ago saw just 50 film buffs squashed into a Sydney cafe one night to watch their home-made films on a television set.

"Although it started as a bit of a joke, it is seen by many people as a legitimate thing to win," Polson said.

"I know many people out there in the commercial (advertising) field, who are just desperate to win Tropfest and get some sort of acclaim from their peers," Polson told Reuters.

"Previous winners each year they have gone on to big and better things," said Polson, who is also an actor.

Gregor Jordan won the 1995 Tropfest with his film Swinger and went on to win the Cannes Film Festival Jury Prize for best short film. Last year's Tropfest winner, Jonathon Ogilvie, was a Cannes finalist with his work This Film Is A Dog.

Nearly 200 entries

TV stuntman Nat Edgerton won this year's Tropfest with Deadline over nearly 200 other films, almost double the number entered in 1996. The first Tropfest drew just eight entries.

Because of the increase in films, Polson decided to show them in February and March at cafes on Sydney's cappuccino strip — Victoria Street — near the King Cross red light district.

The month-long festival, which ends on March 23, has become big business. This year's festival cost about 180,000 Australian dollars ($141,000) — the first Tropfest cost Polson about 800 Australian dollars.

Tropfest takes its name from the Tropicana Cafe in Victoria Street, seen as a popular hangout for aspiring filmmakers. The cafe still has a strong link with the festival, donating a year's supply of coffee to a winner of its own choice.

"I saw it (Tropicana) in those days as the place where people were most guilty of sitting around and talking about movies and not actually out there making them," Polson said.

"The festival is about encouraging people to make films, it is not just about screening them. We could be a festival where we just get the best short films from around the world."

The only criterion for a Tropfest entry is that the film must be seven minutes long and have a pickle in it. Last year it was a teaspoon and the year before that it was a coffee bean.

Tropicana was the sole host of the first two festivals. In its third year the festival crowd took up the whole of Victoria Street, and this year, 13,000 people filled Victoria Street and the local park, where the films were simulcast by satellite.

Popular blend

Mixing films and coffee has proved a popular blend in Sydney and Polson plans to take this combination to cafes around Australia with the help of satellite technology.

"What I want to do next year is have a link-up with other cafes in capital cities around Australia so that we have a national film festival happening simultaneously," Polson said.

The boom in local short-film festivals is attributed both to Australians' love of film viewing and the international success of Australian films.

"I think people are realising that it is just as satisfying, if not more so, to...watch 10 or 12 succinct, strong and well executed ideas as it is to go and watch a feature," Polson said.

In recent years, Sydney has hosted the Flickerfest and Metfest festivals, and Melbourne the St. Kilda Festival.

Ansett Airlines has started begun showing short films on its flights and TV's Seven Network Ltd. is about to begin a 30-minute programme of shorts. Both are partly owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who also has 50 per cent of Australian pay television network Foxtel, which has the right to show the Tropfest films.

Coming soon — Italian cinema, the remake

By Jude Webber
Reuter

ROME — Once upon a time, filmmaking was Italy's forte and Rome was considered the European Hollywood.

But with the rise and rise of the American cinema industry, Italy was left in the shade like a promising child star grown old and struggling to relaunch a flagging career.

Now, a movie-mad culture minister and a new chairman of the National Cinema Board see signs of recovery and want to build on successes such as Gabriele Salvatores's current hit Nirvana to rekindle the Italian film world's 1950s and 1960s glory days.

Central to their hopes is a plan to open the door to foreign investment in Rome's sprawling state-owned Cinecitta (Cinema City) studios — the most famous in the world outside Hollywood — where classics like Ben-Hur and Roman Holiday were made.

Like all the best cinema sequels, the plan has been dubbed Cinecitta II. And it's coming soon.

"We hope to get everything started by the end of March or even earlier," Gillo Pontecorvo, film director and new head of the state-run Ente Cinema Board, which oversees Cinecitta, told Reuters.

Cinema City or TV City?

Pontecorvo has spent the two months since he took over refining a long-awaited plan submitted by the old board to put the operation of the fabled studios in the hands of a new group.

Under the blueprint, British film and leisure group Rank — also known for its chain of Hard Rock Cafes — was to take a 20 per cent stake, as was Italian state broadcaster RAI and rival Mediaset, owned by mogul Silvio Berlusconi.

Italian film producer Vittorio Cecchi Gori, who owns two television channels, was to have had 10 per cent, independent producers another 10 per cent and 20 per cent was to have stayed with the Ente Cinema, which is controlled by the treasury.

But the plan, which includes a deal with a consortium led by Time-Warner and Australia's Village Roadshow to build and run a multiplex cinema, was slammed by an industry fearful that the small screen, and foreigners, would call the shots.

In the past few lean years, the fact that Italian broadcasters have turned to Cinecitta's 16 studios to film some of their daily diet of talk shows and variety programmes has kept much needed cash coming into the coffers.

But purists are offended. "It's virtually all TV these days," said one Cinecitta stage hand pointing to brightly coloured scenery for a variety show.

Pontecorvo, a respected director whose most famous film The Battle Of Algiers won a coveted Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival 30 years ago, said that now recovery was in the air, the plan needed changing to protect Cinecitta's identity.

"I'd like to reduce the stakes of Rank, Mediaset and RAI a bit and bring in two cinema groups (of producers)...so that Cinecitta doesn't become Telecitta," he said.

The last word now rests with the Italian treasury.

Boom, then nearly bust

Cinecitta, which turns 60 in April, was born under fascism in 1937 after fire destroyed the Cines Studios in central Rome.

Situated in a then leafy southern suburb, Cinecitta was the last word in modern technology in Europe's young cinema industry, offering the chance to shoot and process entire films.

Hits including Quo Vadis, La Dolce Vita, Cleopatra and For A Few Dollars More confirmed Cinecitta's place in movie mythology and as the home of a rich Italian film tradition symbolised worldwide by directors such as Federico Fellini.

Inside the complex, which is as big as Vatican City, a corner of Venice has been recreated out of polystyrene complete with a bridge and gondolas. There is also a mediaeval village.

The complex has the capacity to work on 20 movies at once, but recent years have been tough. "Italian cinema was in such crisis that no-one came any more," said Pontecorvo.

Cinecitta plunged 14 billion lire ($8.4 million) into the red in 1995 but a recent upturn has helped chop that deficit back to just under one billion lire. Pontecorvo said the new partners would each invest 25 billion lire in the first year.

"With the new (ownership) structure, turnover should multiply greatly," he said.

Recovery for Cinecitta

Cinecitta spokesman Franco Mariotti said foreign filmmakers slowly began returning to Rome in the early 1980s after the success of the mediaeval monastery mystery The Name Of The Rose.

But the last two years have finally seen an acceleration.

The English Patient — which has been nominated for 12 Oscars at the Academy Awards — was made at Cinecitta, as was Sylvester Stallone's latest action picture Daylight.

Mariotti said that Cinecitta had recently spent six billion lire on a state-of-the-art special effects camera to ensure Italy was in the forefront of technology, but insisted it was not just trying to compete with Hollywood.

"Cinema will be increasingly American, there's no point fighting it," he said. "But I don't see Hollywood as a competitor. Hollywood makes a different cinema, an industrial cinema...We are cinema craftsmen."

Italian movie new wave

Culture Minister Walter Veltroni, a movie buff and one-time amateur director, has vowed to help to revive Italy's film industry and has even expressed his concern to national airline Alitalia about the number of American in-flight films.

His initiatives coincide with a renewed confidence in the Italian movie world, although Mariotti cautioned that "it'll still take a bit of time" before the good old days are back.

But he said he was sure the Cinecitta plan and the rise of talented new directors like Salvatores, whose sci-fi tale Nirvana is packed with dazzling special effects, would consolidate the recovery.

"It's time to dream now," he said. "We're seeing new stories, it's a change from the sadness of our cinema. We're no longer a country that only has mafia and misery."

A sultry screen star who didn't just act — she invented

By Elizabeth Weise
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The next time you pick up a cellular phone, give a brief thought to the improbable woman who first patented some of its underlying technology 55 years ago — "the most beautiful girl in the world," actress Hedy Lamarr.

The sultry, sophisticated brunette star of such hits as Samson And Delilah was the racy stuff of dreams for hundreds of thousands of men who marched off to war.

But there's another side to this pinup image. The pouting, sensuous star had an inquiring intellect and an engineering bent that in another era might have taken her not to Hollywood, but to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

And though she never received an Oscar for her acting, she is about to get an award from the nation's techno-wizards, who have adopted her as one of their own.

To trace the story of Lamarr's invention, it's necessary to hark back to 1933, when the Vienna-born 19-year-old — already famous for her sexy film Ecstasy — became the trophy wife of Austrian armament manufacturer Fritz Mandl in a marriage arranged by her parents.

"I was a kind of slave. When we were in Italy, I couldn't even go swimming without him being there," she said in a phone interview with the Associated Press, the first interview she has granted in 20 years.

Mandl kept her by his side as he attended hundreds of dinners and meetings with arms developers, builders and buyers. But the young Lamarr didn't just play the role of gracious hostess, she also listened and learned.

After four years of marriage, with Mandl increasingly involved in deals with the Nazis, Lamarr knew she must escape. She drugged the maid assigned to guard her, crawled out a window and made her way to London.

There, she appeared on the stage, which led MGM's Louis B. Mayer to offer her a shot in Hollywood — where she got a movie contract, a new name (she was born Hedwig Eva Maria Kiesler) and a new language.

But she didn't forget the immersion course she'd been given in advanced weaponry at the side of the first of her six husbands.

Filled with an abiding hatred of the Nazis and a strong sense of patriotism for her adopted country, she searched for ways to help the war effort.

In 1941, she met composer George Antheil at a Hollywood party.

Dubbed "the bad boy of music," Antheil composed avant-garde, mechanistic symphonies and ballets.

"Hedy didn't suffer fools gladly. George Antheil was not only a musician, but a formidable enough intellect that she could hold an intelligent conversation with him," said Dave Hughes, a Colorado researcher whose work for the National Science Foundation on wireless communication is based in part on the technology Lamarr envisioned more than a half-century ago.

Lamarr wanted to work at the newly established National Inventors Council in Washington, D.C., but was told she could do more for the fight against the Nazis by using her star status to sell war bonds.

But that wasn't enough for her. An intuitive tinkerer, Lamarr said she has always been "interested in everything."

"When I was a little girl, just four years old, I remember my father had a gold watch. And I asked 'why does this in front go around, how does this work?'" she remembered.

Even in the midst of the glitter and pomp of Hollywood, she was full of ideas, including one on the radio control of torpedoes.

She had sat with Mandl as he reviewed films of field tests on torpedo systems, and now her mind began to explore ways to circumvent the jamming that kept the United States from using radio-controlled missiles against the Germans.

As one of her sons, Anthony Loder, recalls, she and Antheil "were sitting at the piano one day and he was hitting some keys and she was following him, and she said 'hey, look, we're talking to each other and we're changing all the time.'"

Fired up with the possibilities, they set to work the next day.

"We were sitting on the floor figuring the whole thing out," she said from her home in Florida.

A simple radio signal sent to control a torpedo was too easy to block. But what if the signal hopped from frequency to frequency at split-second intervals? Anyone trying to listen in or jam it would hear only random noise, like a radio dial being spun. But if both the sender and the receiver where hopping in synch, the message would come through loud and clear.

The idea was Lamarr's, but Antheil, whose compositions had featured up to 14 player pianos playing simultaneously, suggested using piano rolls to make sure both sides were in synch.

Their patent for a "secret communication system" was granted on Aug. 11, 1942.

"I read the patent," said Franklin Antonio, chief technical officer of the cellular phone maker Qualcomm Inc. of San Diego.

"You don't usually think of movie stars having brains, but she sure did."

In fact, it was a brilliant idea — so brilliant that it was years ahead of its time.

"I always am," she said.

In fact, the navy declared Antheil's notion of using a clockwork mechanism controlled by paper tape too cumbersome to be implemented. It would take another 20 years, and the invention of the transistor, for the concept to be realised. Three years after the patent expired, the pair's ideas were used in secure military communication systems installed on U.S. ships sent to blockade Cuba in 1962.

But it was with the widespread availability of fast, cheap and small computer chips that spread spectrum really came into its own.

It's still used by the military, including the U.S. government's Milstar defense communications satellite system, as well as for wireless Internet transmission and in many of the newer cellular phones.

By an odd twist of fate, Lamarr's son Anthony owns a Los Angeles-based phone store.

"It's in every other phone system I sell," he said.

Anthony Loder has written a screenplay about what he sees as his mother's essentially tragic life. Neither she nor Antheil ever received royalty payments for the commercialisation of their patent, though it is cited as the underlying patent for frequency-changing technology. Now 84 — by most accounts, although she says she is 82 — she lives simply and in seclusion.

"She's been forgotten. But she contributed so much to an older generation. A lot of men fell in love with her. And now the younger generation is benefiting from the unknown creative work that she did," her son said.

But some of those men who fell in love with her looks turned into the men who also would make use of her ideas — and fight to get her the recognition they felt she deserved.

Robert Price, an electrical engineer in Lexington, Massachusetts, tried twice in the early 1980s — first with an unsuccessful proposal for an award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and then with a failed attempt to get her a medal of honour from Congress.

Next came Hughes, who champions the cause of a wireless Internet using the very spread spectrum Lamarr envisioned, is taking up the challenge.

"I was a 15-year-old fussing around with a crystal radio set just trying to get a signal in 1941 and, here she was, intellectually articulating a control mechanism for torpedo guidance systems," he said.

He launched a campaign to get Lamarr and Antheil honoured with an award from the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). The cause was taken up by engineers who remembered her not just from her salad days in Hollywood, but by her name on an important patent. The EFF was inundated with a blizzard of E-mail seconds for the nomination.

So last Wednesday, Lamarr and Antheil were honoured with an award for "blazing new trails on the electronic frontier" at the Computers, Freedom and Privacy Conference in San Francisco. Her son accepted it on her behalf.

Lamarr still doesn't suffer fools gladly. Informed of the award, her reaction was blunt.

"It's about time."

Sustainability stressed as key element to build micro-finance practice in Jordan

By Ghalia Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan micro-finance conference wrapped up Wednesday with participants stressing the importance of building a sustainable micro-finance practice in the country.

Sustainability could not be achieved unless operational and financial costs of micro-finance programmes are covered, participants asserted during the closing ceremony of the conference sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank and the European Union (EU).

"Donors would not be around us forever, they are usually unreliable. We need to find ways to be independent," Judith Brandsma, private sector development specialist at the World Bank, told participants referring to the importance of cost coverage as the main key for a sustainable micro-finance project.

Participants also emphasised the need to reach out to a large number of low income groups and provide them with quality financial and business development services.

However, micro-finance consultant Karl Jensen warned that "none of these issues should be tackled in isolation."

"If you don't have a good management information system you cannot maximise the outreach nor can you achieve sustainability," he emphasised.

The three-day conference, which aimed at promoting dialogue among micro-finance practitioners, raised questions about the high interest rates charged on loans.

Some participants, taking the cause of low income people who would not be able to repay the loans, expressed opposition to high interest rates.

Richard Rosenberg, senior advisor at the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP), told a press conference following the meeting that, however, interest rates ensure the sustainability of a micro-finance project because donors are not always available for financing.

"We have learned over the years that if we want these programmes to reach large numbers of poor people, there are prices that have to be paid. One of them is that you have to pursue loan collection very vigorously because there is no collateral," Mr. Rosenberg said.

He explained that "people are motivated to repay their loans in order to have continued access to these loans for as long as they want."

Jorgen Lissner, UNDP resident representative in Jordan, told the Jordan Times in an interview that although interest rates could be higher than those charged at commercial banks, poor people get higher return on their money.

"A big businessman can get three, five to ten per cent return on his investment, but we forget that poor people could get 50 to 100 per cent return on their investments," he said.

"To first ask what is the interest rate is wrong. We should ask what is the return for a poor person taking a JD 100 loan," Mr. Lissner added.

Charity vs commercialism

Focusing on Jordan, Mr. Lissner said "nothing much has been done for people who do not need charity and, at the same time, are not as well off to borrow from banks."

"We are talking about a huge area between charity and commercialism where tens of thousands of Jordanian people find themselves(trapped)," Mr. Lissner said.

One of the problems that impede sustainability of micro-finance projects in Jordan, Mr. Lissner said, is the "tradition of loan forgiveness."

"There is nothing wrong with that approach except that it creates a culture, where a loan is not quite a loan but a gift in disguise," he added.

"IF you cannot cover your costs you cannot create a sustainable scheme," Mr. Lissner asserted.

Therefore, he added, "what we are trying to do with our Jordanian colleagues from NGOs is to see if we can come up with a scheme, or more than one scheme, which will address the need of the poor in a sustainable way."

Taleb Rifai, director general of the Investment Promotion Corporation (IPC), told journalists that small and medium enterprises "are the main pillar of our economy."

However, he added, "the legal framework, under which tax exemptions and project support are granted, is designed to only serve big and medium investments."

"The problem of small projects is not limited to financing as its implementation is also based on providing the suitable climate, said Dr. Rifai.

CARE International country representative Jonathan Patrick stressed that micro-credit should be viewed as a development tool.

Mr. Patrick, whose organisation focuses on group lending for women, said that "micro-credit is a very efficient way to create jobs in Jordan."

He told the Jordan Times in an interview that "tangible benefits" of micro-finance projects are often ignored.

He pointed out that such benefits can be measured through permanent increase in income, increase in self confidence and group solidarity.

This conference comes less than six weeks after the Washington micro-credit summit which brought together more than 2,000 participants from all over the world.

The conference made a commitment that by the year 2005, micro-credit would be extended to 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families. Mr. Lissner said that UNDP has announced a $41 million MicroStart project at the Washington micro-credit summit.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates — Prices as at 19/03/97 20:10

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.5831	0.6262	1.4462	122.75	1.3780	1687.30	1.8950	5.6782
DE Mark	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
GB Sterling	1.5970	2.6885	-	2.3107	195.82	2.2007	2695.63	3.0275	9.0715
CH Franc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
JP Yen	0.0081	1.3698	0.5095	1.1772	-	1.1223	13.73	154.22	4.6221
CA Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
IT Lira	0.0006	0.9968	0.3707	0.0857	1376.08	0.8165	-	11.22	3.3633
NL Guilder	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]
FR Franc	0.1761	0.2962	0.1102	25.4649	21.60	0.2427	33.34	33.3400	-

Energy

Oils	Last	Previous
Brent	19.90	20.45
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bony	19.90	20.45
Dubai	[illegible]	[illegible]
UL Gas	199.00	199.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4490	0.1669	0.38579	32.7579
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
KW Dinar	3.2971	5.55247	2.06356	4.77099	405.022
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CY Pound	1.9748	3.3229	1.2361	2.8557	242.422

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	350.5	351
Silver (oz's)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Platinum (oz's)	376.75	377.75
Au (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]
CU (3 Months)	2324	2325
Zinc (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lead (3 Months)	690	691
Ni (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Period / C'ncy	- 1 - Month	- 3 - Months	- 6 - Months	- 9 - Months	- 1 - Year
USD	5.50	5.51	5.68	5.82	5.97
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
JPY	0.38	0.38	0.59	0.46	0.65
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
FRF	3.22	3.27	3.36	3.44	3.81
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ITL	7.38	7.40	7.34	7.25	7.28

Main Equity Indicies

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	6841.8	-54.76	-0.79	6913.94	6841.8	6896.56
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
London	FT-SE 100	4332.2	-24.6	-0.56	4371.4	4331.4	4356.8
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paris	CAC 40	2596.77	22.82	0.89	2599.22	2577.45	2573.95
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 1997

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try to get some suggestions from persons today who are successful in your own area of business. If you have to make a trip, be sure to watch your budget, so that you won't be short of funds in an emergency.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can easily convince others today to join you in a new venture which will increase your assets. Talk over any difficulties with your mate later this evening so that there won't be any difficulties ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Do a small favour today which will bring you the respect of a superior. Later this evening is a good time to work on improving your health and appearance so that you will get noticed by those in authority.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Sit down for a chat today with a clever fellow associate, and come to a fine and profitable agreement. Enjoy your loved ones later this evening and relax for the days ahead because they are going to be hectic with career activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make some plans for an amusement with your closest friends today and thereby you can all enjoy yourselves. Don't take any unnecessary risks while driving on the highway or in motion of any kind if you can help it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find a method of operation today to make your home more as you and your loved ones would like it. If you invite guests in later this evening, make sure they are completely trustworthy so you can avoid any difficulties.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Bring those persons back into your life today whom you have been neglecting lately. Something will happen today to make your days ahead brighter, so keep an eye out for the opportunity and make the best of it.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Pay special attention to money matters today, and you'll get excellent results. An expert can give you some very valuable business advice so it would be to your advantage to pay attention to what is provided.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get together with some friends who have the same hobbies as you today and have a good time together. Be sure to drive carefully while on the highway and thereby avoid any difficulties you could encounter.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't confide your personal plans to others today, and don't do anything which might damage your reputation. Be considerate of your mate later this evening and thereby you can have a pleasurable time together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you contact good friends and state your aims clearly today, they will help you make real progress. Be sure to show your appreciation to close friends and thereby you can get into recreational activities which are fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You can gain many benefits through a community project at this time. Relax at home with your mate later this evening, and get plenty of rest for in the days ahead you will have plenty of career activities.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Although you are busy with business matters today, a new interest may arise which will make you a much happier and relaxed person. This evening will be good for you to spend this time with your loved ones and just relax.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Although a fellow associate may have ideas different from your own today, you can labour together quite well. Don't make any promises you can keep or you could damage your reputation which has taken much time to establish.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study every angle of your daily routines today, and find a way to increase your output. Don't rely too much on others this evening or could be disappointed with the results. This is a good time to go out on the town with friends.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Add some excitement to your duties today, and you'll get better result from your efforts. Be sure to accept any good ideas from fellow associates which can make your career activities much more beneficial.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may receive an invitation today which will lift your spirits considerably. Invite only interesting and exciting persons into your home tonight and you can have a wonderful time together in each others company.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Shopping and running errands could annoy you today, however, a family friend will cheer you up. Be careful in giving out advice later this evening or you could discover that much difficulty could come about.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It is good to be conscientious in your career activities today, however, leave time for recreation. Don't talk about financial matters with strangers later this evening or you could discover you have been tricked.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Take care of your personal duties this morning, however, don't neglect practical affairs. You should not hesitate to discuss your difficulties with friends since they could come up with solutions which you hadn't considered.

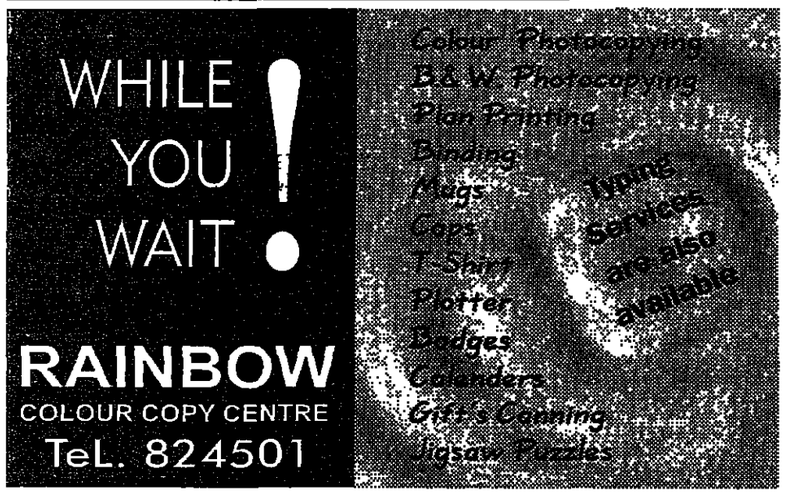
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to look at your situation in a more positive light today and you won't feel so depressed. Doing your best will be more than enough. Later this evening you can meet with knowledgeable people and gain good advice.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have to put up with a boring person today, however, your patience will be greatly rewarded. Enjoy your loved ones later this evening and thereby make your residence a much more pleasant location.

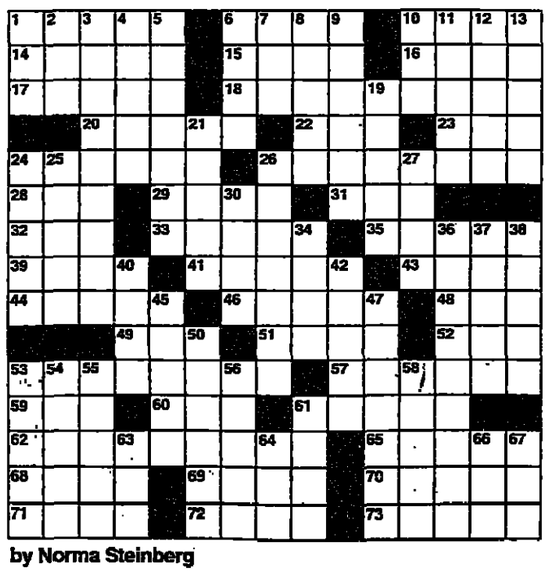
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Do whatever is necessary today to improve your credit situation. A close friend will make it possible for you to have a good time later this evening. This is a good time to meet with fellow associate and complete any new projects.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You need more information today before you can handle a new project wisely. Make note of any suggestions you get so that you won't forget them and use the best ones on your career activities to be successful.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper.



THE Daily Crossword



by Norma Steinberg

ACROSS
1 — we trust
6 Apex
10 Add seasoning
14 Dudley or Mary Tyler
15 Social affairs
16 Dairy case item
17 Likely to
18 Gridiron score
20 One of Snow White's friends
22 Chou En—
23 Convene
24 Baby feline
26 After-dinner coffee
28 Ms. Lupino
29 E.R.A., e.g.
31 Nosh
32 Fleur-de—
33 More faithful
35 En — (all together)
39 Toddlers
41 Mistake
43 Govt. agt.
44 Cook without oil
46 Diarist Nin
48 Certain time letters
49 Jewel
51 Part of the foot
52 Commit perjury
53 Substance
57 Medicine man
59 Actor Wallach
60 Manhattan, for one: abbr.
61 — firma
62 Tourist
65 Handbag
68 Yearn
69 Ready for
70 Lessen
71 Matched collections
72 Take off
73 Half man/half goat

DOWN
1 Sprite
2 Neither's partner
3 Discrimination
4 Whether —
5 Most profound
6 Lawyer: abbr.
7 Company VIP
8 Handles roughly
9 Get away from
10 Turf
11 At — for words
12 Explorer Meriwether
13 The Lone Ranger's sidekick
19 King of Tyre
21 — nous
24 Highlands wear
25 Dope
26 Timeless
27 Coup d'—
30 Distinctive quality
34 Leonine sound
36 Be suspicious
37 — Hawkins Day
38 Go in
40 Turkey stuffing herb
42 Nouveau —
45 Deserve
47 Nepalese natives
50 Wife, familiarly
53 Tablelands
54 Carroll's heroine
55 Close-fitting
56 Hebrew letter
58 Curacao's neighbor
61 Stepped on
63 Males
64 Riviera summer
66 Filthy place
67 Always, to poets

J	A	C	K		W	H	A	M		T	U	F	A	S
O	X	E	N		H	U	G	O		S	N	A	R	L
G	O	R	E		O	M	E	N		A	E	R	I	E
S	N	O	W	E	D	U	N	D	E	R		F	O	E
				M	U	S	T	E	R		B	E	S	T
G	I	B	B	O	N				S	T	A	T	E	S
N	O	E	L		I	O	T	A		E	T	C		
U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R
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C	H	A	P	E	L				P	L	E	D	G	E
R	A	G	S		M	A	R	T	H	A				
E	N	G		U	N	D	E	R	A	C	L	O	U	D
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L	O	E	W	E		P	E	R	I		B	A	E	Z
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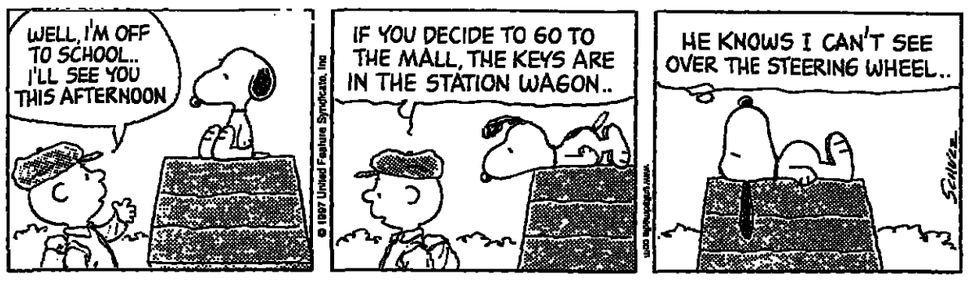
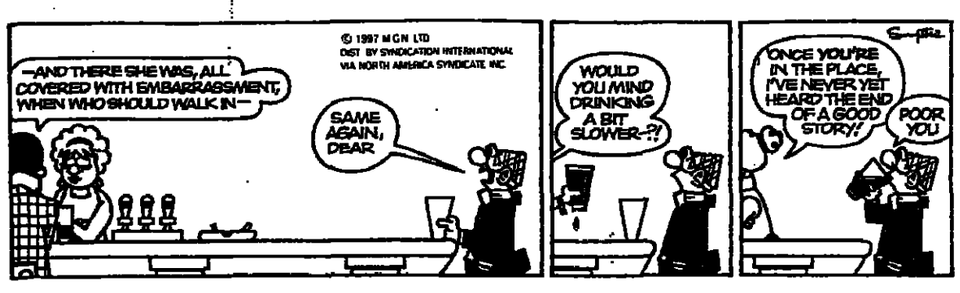
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

Crown Prince Hassan — distinguished scholar, educator, statesman and father

Following are several interviews conducted by Jordan Television on the occasion of HRH Crown Prince Hassan's 50th birthday anniversary:

UNHCR Sadako Ogata

Well I would like to wish him continued success in advocating (human treatment) of people all over the world. When the Crown Prince initiated the study to look into humanitarian issues in the world, he was really advocating a humanitarian new order in the world. ... He was always thinking about the future and trying to bring the new generation of young people to be more careful in a world that has been much less caring for the right causes. And for about three years he was together with Prince Sadreddin Aga Khan, the co-chairman, and we met twice a year in various places. I was enormously impressed not only by his vision, but by his knowledge and his compassion, and I think this was the commission that tackled humanitarian problems from all angles. This was one commission that produced a lot of books and good studies...

This was something that I think (tackles) all the concerns that not only continue to exist but should be solved in the future. So I think it is the continuing work that he has initiated. I do know that he has many important state duties...

But at the core of this concern is this great passion for people, and the weak people, and this is a message that I think I personally find not only very inspiring ... and I think this is what is so important about having a leader who can inspire ... to be as concerned as he is.

HRH Crown Prince Hassan with Prince Rashid

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Fieldmarshal Abdul Hafez Kaabneh:

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to talk about an aspect in the life of Prince Hassan that not many know about. No matter how much we talk about Prince Hassan, we cannot give him his right due. The Armed Forces is one of the Crown Prince's top priorities. He is a military man by nature, he enjoys a military character, as is manifested by his physical stamina and his participation in long marches with soldiers and taking part in chivalry games, such as polo: as you know, he is the captain of the national polo team.

One thing that I can never forget is when he insisted on inspecting and getting reassured on the people's conditions during a snow storm. Although roads were blocked, he overcame all hardships and managed to get to stranded areas on foot. Another example is his climb to a very high mountain summit near the Dead Sea in a celebration marking the anniversary of the First Armoured Division. This climb has become an exercise and a test of stamina for the personnel of units in the area.

Regarding the intellectual aspect, Prince Hassan has a comprehensive strategic vision. This is clearly manifested in his discussions with officers of various ranks, dealing with topics such as minor mobilisation or main strategic topics at the War and Defence College. It is easy to notice his interest in comprehensive planning and his knowledge of all aspects and dimensions of military subjects, as is reflected in his participation in international seminars and conferences related to peace keeping.

He also enjoys an immense military education which explains his keen interest in the Armed Forces. In training fields, for example, he is interested in preparing young leaders and takes part in military drills and manoeuvres as well as shooting targets, using various light and heavy weapons. In one of the manoeuvres, as I remember, Prince Hassan was riding a Land Rover car through the lines of tanks during the most dangerous stages of the manoeuvre so as to personally oversee the target shooting operation and judge the participating units' skill in dealing with the landscape.

There are also other interests, which are the visits he pays to military units in implementation of directives by His Majesty, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, be they visits to front-line units or international peacekeeping forces in various conflict areas in the world. Dangers inherent in such visits have never stopped him. He insists on making the visits to be able to meet with soldiers and be reassured on their conditions and conveying the greetings of His Majesty to them. It is no secret that His Royal Highness enjoys being among soldiers, talking to them, having meals and sipping tea with them. I remember one hot day in July, His Royal Highness visited one front-line unit in the Jordan Valley on foot for more than 20 kilometres. What surprised me was that he took his son, His Royal Highness Prince Rashed, in the mid of that hot day to encourage him to contact soldiers in the frontline.

No doubt, Prince Hassan is a distinguished pioneer in the field of utilising the military in the development process. He is always encouraging the Armed Forces to carry out projects, establish industries, build earth dams and digs and train civil personnel, such as engineers and doctors. He has special interest in providing residents of remote areas with education and vocational training. The scientific military week, held annually under his patronage and organised jointly by the Higher Council of Science and Technology and the Armed Forces, aims to utilise the available human and defence resources in serving the development process.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi:

This day brings to my mind the various attributes of His Royal Highness, though it will be difficult to deal with all of them in the short space and time allotted me. Thus I will try to talk about one characteristic I experienced personally, which is known to all those who worked with the Crown Prince in any field, and that is his comprehensive intellectual knowledge and vision. In elaboration, I will deal with two examples. The first is the educational reform process started in the second half of the 1980s and the second is the administrative reform process launched in the mid 1990s, with both supervised by Prince Hassan under directives by His Majesty the King.

The educational reform process was preceded by many endeavours to ameliorate the educational system, but they only dealt with one aspect of the system. When Prince Hassan took over the process, he first of all requested defining the elements of the process as a whole since it is not feasible to only deal with one side of the issue and ignore the rest as has happened before. Consequently, for the first time, 12 elements of the educational process — including curricula, textbooks, teachers, supervisors, school buildings, libraries, laboratories, vocational workshops, extra-curricular activities, etc. —were defined. So it was the first time to handle the educational reform process in a comprehensive manner.

The second example is the administrative reform process which was launched in the mid-90s through the formation of a commission headed by the Crown Prince upon directives by His Majesty the King. The same happened with this process. Previously, reform attempts dealt only with one element, which is the employees and the need to have the right person in the right place. Prince Hassan ordered that all administrative elements be dealt with. The public administration system does not consist only of employees. It includes jobs, job descriptions, evaluation, philosophies, various legislation, etc. So administrative reform started to take a comprehensive form.

These two examples are a clear manifestation of the Crown Prince's comprehensive vision.

Her Royal Highness Princess Alia:

Our relationship is too close. I consider him as a brother more than an uncle. We grew up together and we have good memories of our childhood...

I learned a lot from him, mainly his liking of learning the various languages, liking sports, such as horse riding. In addition, he gave me the chance to learn taekwondo and I became the first Jordanian woman to receive a black belt in that sport since we were training together. There are many common things between us. It is known that he is hard-working and rarely thinks of himself.

He is a very unique person, very intelligent and farsighted. He looks very serious because he is always busy and pushes himself too hard in work.

As a father, he likes his children very much and likes family gatherings.

Zarqa University President Ishaq Farhan:

We had the honour of knowing His Royal Highness since his graduation from British universities in 1964. I was then director of curricula. He showed interest in the Education Law No. 16 of 1964 and in curricula development. His main focus was linking education with the needs of the development process and the society. When I became minister of education in 1970-73, the young prince showed interest in youth. Then the late Prime Minister Wasfi Al Tell was giving great emphasis to Al Hussein youth camps, and I had the honour of running them through my post and the Prince was keenly interested in the youth. I also had the honour of dealing with the Prince for a third time when I became president of the Royal Scientific Society in 1975. It was his idea to transfer technology, to implant technology in Jordan, and electronics was his main concern in this field. He was also interested in applied scientific research which aims at meeting the society's needs. I had the honour of working under him at the society and travelling with him to Korea, Japan and Egypt to get familiarised with the various scientific centres. I also remember that he received $500,000 million from Japan at the time for the electronics laboratory. Also, when I became president of the University of Jordan in 1976 and 1978, he was interested in establishing a faculty of engineering; and thus the faculty was established. His care also encompassed professors and thus we established a housing for them on campus. Also, through the various political and social stages, I had the honour of meeting him in educational and development conferences. We all take pride in the clever Prince, the scholar, the economist, the young Prince.

CBJ Governor Ziad Fariz:

I had the honour of working with His Royal Highness, and under his supervision, in various development fields and I always felt his keenness to steer the development process in a manner that would make Jordan a self-sufficient country. The Crown Prince's strong faith in the country's potential and capabilities was not only reflected in calls for action and planning, but also in continued work in various fields.

By nature, the Crown Prince has many interests in all that will lead to developing Jordan economically and giving it ithe status it deserves.

His Royal Highness relied, in implementing development plans, on the human element, calling for action and thinking, as well as utilising potentials through constructive dialogue. He always stressed the importance of clear thinking and pinpointing problems in order to tackle them. This dialogue has positively developed due to His Royal Highness's insistence on encouraging national dialogue. Our Prince is not only a young prince, but he is also a persevering intellectual and scholar. Maybe working with the prince is not an easy task. It always requires hard work. I never remember going to a meeting with him without having to prepare thoroughly for it, to study its basic ideas, the problem and the goals.

Prince Hassan managed also to introduce a new means of communications and the world is listening to our views in a rational manner. He managed to make Jordan's views heard all over, particularly in visits to the U.S. and other world countries. Working to enhance Jordan's status, the Prince has a great role in Jordan's relations with the U.S. and the European Commission.

Former Prime Minister Taher Al Masri:

Family is the most important element in human society. And that is my prelude to talking about Prince Hassan's first characteristic. He is a successful father who believes in the importance of family. This shows his faith in the Arab value system. The second characteristic is his education. He is an educated politician who dealt with many world leaders. In his participation in many dialogues and debates he does not talk as a specialist but as an intellectual. His talk on social, economic and inter-faith issues is a true example of his intellectual attributes. His cultural and political maturity over 32 years as crown prince have combined to make of him a distinguished figure, a distinguished statesman.

Former Prime Minister Zeid Rifai:

I do not know in the records of history of three brothers who have occupied the highest positions at the same time as did His Majesty King Hussein and Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Prince Mohammad who live in the hearts of their people.

One of the most important factors that contributed to the character of Prince Hassan, in addition to the great Hashemite legacy, is his growth with his brother King Hussein, on the one hand, and his distinguished education, on the other. When he took his first steps on the road of construction and development of his country, he raised high the slogan of "the Royal Scientific Society." And this was because His Royal Highness realised the importance of education and science as a means for a human being's progress. Prince Hassan has faith in God, in his brother, his country and his nation, and for all these he carried Jordan's message and role. His visits to world capitals and seminars were always crowned with success, as he always carried with him his majestic and great knowledge, and when he turned 50 he became greater and more glorious.

Lower House of Parliament Speaker Saad Hayel Srour:

When talking about the Crown Prince one is faced with a myriad of words. The Prince has corrected many wrongs under the King's directives when he was following up national and pan-Arab issues, as well as issues of concern to the human race in general. He is known for his persistence in following up issues. I accompanied him on tours in the badia and countryside regions where issues of concern to citizens all over where discussed. I had the honour of attending several meetings and conferences on development which were held under his patronage.

These conferences helped prepare a new young generation which is now growing and making great strides on the road of progress. During the past stage, the Prince played a great role in parliamentary fields, be it in Jordan, or, abroad.. He gave due concern to the issue of Islam and the distortions it is facing as a result of some incidents here and there and attempts to label the religion as terrorist. We have all due respect and appreciation for the Prince for his tackling of this issue and following it up at the parliamentary, popular and official levels. What the Prince offered to his society and country is great and cannot be summed in a few words.

Former Secretary General of the Jordan Valley Authority and of the Water Authority Munther Haddadin:

The Prince appointed me and some others at the Royal Scientific Society, since its establishment, and asked me to head one of its departments.

I always thought that I was the most loyal to this country until I knew the Prince. Then I discovered that my love for my country is but a fraction of the love he has in his heart. He once took me on one of his trips to the Jordan Valley, to the Prince Mohammad Bridge and familiarised me with Israeli settlement plans in the Jordan Valley and then asked me to work on the Jordan Valley Commission. His visits to the society and the commission never ceased until we overcame our inability and were propelled to prepare construction and development plans for the valley. He has great hopes and is eager to achieve the best standards of living for the people. He always managed to secure foreign financing for development projects and contributed to making Jordan what it is now. He led Jordan's team for talks with the World Bank. When once he asked the World Bank for a loan to develop the Jordan Valley, a bank official replied: "But you are in a state of war." To this the Prince answered: "But you give Israel loans to produce flowers which are exported to Europe; how can we be in a state of war if they aren't?" He never relents. He tried all doors until we got the resources needed for carrying out projects.

Sheikh Faisal Ben Jazi:

I used to accompany the Prince on his visits to the badia, which often used to take place at night. I admire his brilliance and he never forgets a person he meets. He is generous and kind, always inspects people's conditions. In case he finds someone sick, he helps in admitting him to hospital and helps persons in need.

HRH Prince Hassan with his mohter, the late Queen Zein Al Sharaf

Crown Prince: Tolerance and co-existence are guaranteed not by the might of armies, but by the friendships of children; peace must be whole to be real, just to be lasting and tangible to be effective

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

HRH Crown Prince Hassan surrounded by members of his family

ACUTENESS IN identifying causes and factors, sensibility in ordering priorities, foresight in conceiving broad long-term strategies for comprehensive solutions, and diplomatic and communicative skills in bridging the views of various parties have characterised His Royal Highness Prince Hassan's 32 years as Crown Prince.

His repeated calls for international and regional cooperation as the only way to ensure comprehensive solutions were always accompanied by a constant focus on the "human dimension" of politics and economics.

The key words in his speeches invariably reflect the principles inspiring his carrier as a statesman: humanity, dialogue, comprehensiveness, cooperation, interconnectedness of issues and regions.

Humanity, the Crown Prince believes, is the principle by which policies should be inspired and on which decision-makers should focus.

Dialogue should be the first step towards real understanding and cooperation.

Comprehensiveness is, in his world view, the first requirement of problem-solving strategies and the key to achieving just solutions.

Cooperation is the key to development.

"The human dimension of politics, security and economics can no longer be ignored," the Crown Prince reiterated in one of his latest addresses at a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) consultative meeting in Amman, two weeks ago.

"The aim is not only freedom from military fear, nuclear and otherwise, but for people to live better and secure lives in common prosperity," he said.

A down-to-earth statesman, eager to see realised in the street what has been agreed upon at the negotiation table, the Crown Prince has always stressed the fact that peace would never be real unless it is translated into tangible improvement in the daily life of the region's people.

In an address at the general annual meeting in London of the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History in November 1994, he stated: "Peace is not simply a matter of treaties; it is a state of mind, and a way of life. Governments may sign agreements, but the building of bridges between peoples so long divided is altogether more difficult. The importance here of intangible factors, such as cultural understanding, cannot be overstated.

Tolerance and co-existence are guaranteed not by the might of armies, but by the friendships of children."

"Sustainable peace needs to address people's needs," he told the closing session of the first MENA economic summit in Casablanca, in November 1994.

A few weeks after the signing of the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, in an address to the Oxford Union Society, (November 20, 1994), the Crown Prince said that "peace must be whole to be real, just to be lasting and tangible to be effective."

Saluting the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty as "a new beginning, a fresh dawn for our troubled region," the Crown Prince said in the same speech that "the ratification of the treaty means that our future is no longer dominated by the political legacy of the past, but by the promise of the future."

Under the guidance of His Majesty King Hussein, Crown Prince Hassan has always been a generous contributor to the cause of regional peace.

After the election of hard-liner Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, in May 1996, the Crown Prince repeatedly called on the Likud government to assume more moderate stands and voiced, on numerous occasion,s Arab concerns over the future of the peace process.

The Crown Prince has constantly rejected the Likud premier's concept of "peace for security" as an alternative to the international principle of "land-for-peace."

On many occasions, in international as well as local fora, he stressed that security in the Middle East cannot be achieved before the attainment of peace and warned against the achievement of military security at the expenses of humanitarian and social security.

In a speech delivered at the Sorbonne University, in Paris, in October 1996, he said that "comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East can only be achieved by honouring the U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, under the formula of land-for-peace."

Peace can only be achieved through a comprehensive solution to "all the complicated issues hindering any progress in the march towards peace, such as the final status of Jerusalem, the refugee problem, the resumption of negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and solution to water scarcity in the region," the Crown Prince told academics and politicians from all over the world participating in a conference entitled "And What If the Peace Process Fails?" held in Amman in December1996.

"People are not solely economic entities; they are more than instruments for producing commodities. Human beings must not be seen merely as the means of production and prosperity. The end towards which all our efforts are focused must surely be the quality of human life, and this is shaped by intangible as well as material considerations," the Crown Prince said in an address at a roundtable on "The Human Dimension of Peace," held in Amman in November 1994.

A few months earlier, in June, he had launched before the U.N. General Assembly the concept of "pax humanitas"; a "humanitarian peace which best reflects the aspirations of the U.N. founding fathers, and most effectively meets our needs at this juncture of world history."

In the introduction to "Search for Peace," the book he authored in 1984, the Crown Prince wrote: "Politics is also about people, and it is the hopes and needs of the people of the region that I am to articulate."

The King's right arm since his appointment as Crown Prince, Prince Hassan's approach to issues of regional and global concern has always been characterised by a search for cooperation.

While peace negotiations were under way between Jordan and Israel, the Crown Prince told the representatives of the international community convened in New York for the United Nations General Assembly that "important as our bilateral talks may be, we are keenly aware that no two nations stand alone."

One of the issues which "defies the confines of bilateralism, and requires regional and international participation" concerns the spiritual significance of Jerusalem.

"For believers in the three great monotheistic faiths, Jerusalem must be the ultimate symbol of peace and its glorious manifestation."

Maintaining that "any arrangement reached must serve the needs of the millions of followers of Islam, Christianity and Judaism," the Crown Prince has ensured Jordan's commitment to hand over Jerusalem shrines to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) once an accord is reached between the PNA and Israel, in the final status negotiations.

"In the final status negotiations, when responsibility is transferred in full to the Palestinians, the responsibility (for the holy sites' custody) will be transferred in full to those concerned," he told the 1994 Casablanca MENA economic summit.

"We cannot accept that we would one day have to relinquish the Arab and Muslim identity except to an Arab and Muslim identity and... not to the Israeli occupier."

The issue of the status of Jerusalem as the capital of the three Abrahamic religions and the cradle of the world's monotheistic religions leads to the Crown Prince's continuous quest for dialogue and understanding among all the children of Abraham.

The Crown Prince has strongly voiced Jordan's stand on Palestinian refugee issues based on the right of return and/or compensation as upheld by U.N. Security Council resolutions 194 and 242.

Giving a key-note address to a UNHCR consultative meeting in Amman in March 1997, he said: "The Jordanians have shared with their Palestinian brethren the available and often scarce resources. The Palestinians, for their part, contributed to building Jordan. Yet, I wish to emphasise that their right to have their problem resolved justly and on the basis of the U.N. resolutions and international law has not been infringed, and their right of return and/or compensation has not been compromised."

The Crown Prince has repeatedly voiced his concern over the large financial gap between the real needs of humanitarian emergencies and the U.N. organisations' budget realities and has urged the international community to be "more reflective of the commitment to the humanitarian duties and responsibilities of the U.N. and indeed more sympathetic to these responsibilities, particularly in terms of basic needs of education and medical care to the Palestinian refugees," as he said in two addresses to the UNRWA donor countries conference, in Amman, in September 1996 and in New York, in December 1996.

Addressing the closing session of the first MENA economic summit in Casablanca, in November 1994, he stressed the importance of continued and sustained regional economic interaction and cooperation.

"I hope that we will be active partners in setting the stage for regional cooperation and trade and investments and helping to link this region's economy with that of the world," Prince Hassan said.

In his speech at the U.N. General Assembly in October 1995, Prince Hassan said: "We must protect the rule of law, but we must go further and ensure that democracy, pluralism and respect for human rights come to govern the life of nations. We must evolve new procedures of cooperation, communication and accommodation. We must promote social responsibility, national commitment and international obligation. Nations must learn to co-exist with their neighbours, but, more than this, they must learn to work willingly together as partners in the enterprise of peace."

His comprehensive approach to domestic as well as international problems entails great emphasis on human resources development.

In the Crown Prince's view, education is the key to a future of peace, economic development, respect for human rights and protection of the environment.

At the 43rd world assembly of the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) in Amman, December 1996, the Crown Prince stressed the human dimension of "innovative teaching and learning methodologies" which must address "the complex relationships between thinking and feeling, intellect and emotions."

"Universal education is a powerful force for positive change.

Rather than reduce education to a mere acquisition of information, governments and institutions, as well as educators themselves, should promote education as a process aimed at stimulating thinking skills and critical approaches and encouraging a sympathetic understanding of religious, ethnical and cultural differences."

Delivering the prestigious "Frank Klessen Lecture" at the ICET meeting, he called for educating "the citizens of the 21st century... to become men and women of peace."

"Cooperative problem-solving and consensual decision-making" are the keys to ensure the victory of the "forward-looking forces leading the way to a global society and a global economy" over the "other groups remaining within the cycle of violence that has plagued the (Mideast) region for far too long."

Schooling must "generate teaching-learning processes that facilitate the development of humanitarian values as well as scientific and artistic creativity, social responsibility and effective communication skills." Hence, the Crown Prince's bold initiative in creating and personally following up the development of national institutions aimed at stimulating research and developing human resources.

The Time magazine said about him that "he represents a new generation of Middle Eastern leader anxious to transform the region, ... impatient with the Arab bureaucracy holding up his attempts to boost Jordan's economy" (Nov. 23, 1992).

Speaking at the opening plenary session of the MENA Economic Summit in Casablanca, Prince Hassan stated Jordan's commitment to free market economy and to enhancing the private sector's role.

"We encourage foreign investment, and we plan to work closely with the private sector to identify priorities for improvement," he said.

Royal Commission for Modernisation and Development

Under a directive from His Majesty King Hussein, the Crown Prince chairs the Royal Commission for Modernisation and Development (RCMD), established in August 1994 to work on upgrading legislation, enforcing respect for the law, expediting judicial work, ensuring citizens' rights and promoting a favourable investment climate.

In his letter to King Hussein, accepting the task, the Crown Prince described the dimension of his new mission as related to "the development of legislation, expanding the circle of law, ensuring the highest degree of unique and honest performance, enhancing respect for the law and ensuring coordination among the various parties concerned."

In his address to the RCMD in September 1994, he called for measures aimed at encouraging and stimulating the middle class as a driving force for the private sector.

"We are for modernising laws and legislation with a view to involving all classes in shouldering responsibility which should not remain confined to the government alone."

Following are some institutions Crown Prince Hassan established over time:

The Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues

The Crown Prince proposed the establishment of a "new International Humanitarian Order." The proposal, forwarded to the 36th session of the United Nation General Assembly in 1981, led to his founding and co-chairing, in 1983, of the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICIHI). The ICIHI was co-chaired by current United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata.

The Crown Prince presented the commission's final report to the U.N. secretary general at the 42nd General Assembly, in 1987.

The Royal Scientific Society and the Higher Council for Science and Technology

To address Jordan's need for increased technology development, Prince Hassan sponsored the march of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and has been chairman of its Board of Trustees since its inception, 1970.

Today, the RSS is an applied research organisation which supplies high-level services in the field of industry.

In 1987, the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) was established under the chairmanship of the Crown Prince, and the RSS became one of its affiliated institutions.

The RSS conducts scientific and technological research associated with the overall development process in the Kingdom, particularly in the field of industrial development.

The Crown Prince gave several directives to the HCST on the issues of industrial policy and its role in stimulating investment in the Kingdom, as well as linking industry to vocational training programmes.

The Arab Thought Forum

As part of his efforts to bridge the gap between intellectuals and decision makers on issues confronting the Arab World today, the Crown Prince founded in 1981 an independent Arab "think tank," the Arab Thought Forum (ATF).

Since its inception, the ATF has been dealing with a host of issues of concern to Arab and Islamic countries, including food security, education, regional cooperation, violence and politics in the Arab World.

Around 150 among the most illustrious scholars, intellectuals, political scientists and writers in the Arab and Muslim World are members of the ATF, while 21 world institutions hold regular contacts with the forum.

"We live in a world of interlinked and complicated social, political and economic interests and it is no more possible for each country to achieve progress on its own without cooperation with others," the Crown Prince told the ATF 1996 annual meeting (May 1996).

"No matter how big the setbacks and frustrations, they should not discourage us from rebuilding solidarity and achieve integration among the Arab states."

Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research Al al-Beit Foundation

Founded by the Crown Prince in 1980, Al al-Beit Foundation is concerned with various aspects of Islamic law and addresses the challenges facing Islam today by promoting a modern, integrated system of Islamic social values.

Institute of Diplomacy

The Institute of Diplomacy was established upon the initiative of Prince Hassan in 1994 as an academic and training institute to graduate qualified, well rounded diplomats and personnel working in the fields of international relations and external communications.

The Crown Prince chairs the Institute's Board of Directors.

Since its establishment, the Institute of Diplomacy has organised a number of international conferences held under the patronage of Prince Hassan and attended by renowned politicians, economists and researchers from around the world.

Such activities include: a roundtable on The Human Dimension of the Middle East Peace Process (1994); the Roundtable on Strengthening the commitment to the Universality of Human Rights (1994); the Jordan Week in Japan and the Symposium on Jordanian-Japanese Relations (1995).

The Institute of Diplomacy also hosted various lectures by international experts and has sponsored publications on issues of current interest in international affairs.

Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies

Created by the Crown Prince in 1994, the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies has been described by German Professor Albrecht Noth as "a unique institute at the international level."

"I believe in a centrist and moderate Islam that can bridge our fears and provide a clear programme of action," the Crown Prince declared at a "Fear of Peace Workshop," held in Amman in February 1997.

The 42nd descendant in male line from Prophet Mohammed, Prince Hassan has multiplied in the past years his calls for expanding inter-faith dialogue in order to reach a universal understanding on ways to combat religious extremism.

By funding the Royal Institute for Interfaith-Studies, he aimed at stimulating inter-faith dialogue among the three monotheistic religions through exchange of scholars, workshops and publications.

As a member of the International Parliamentary Association against anti-Semitism (IPAS), the Crown Prince has often warned against the stereotypes of Islam in the Western world and expressed the Islamic world's concern with the spread of fear of Islam, or "Islamophobia."

"It is irrelevant whether the other is a Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or a member of any other minority. An attack, a denigration, an exclusion of any is an affront to all," he told an IPAS meeting in 1994.

"Islam's success as a world religion (belonging to the family of monotheistic, scriptural religions which includes Judaism and Christianity) and civilisation testifies to its ability to accommodate diversity."

The Crown Prince's book "Christianity in the Arab World" was seen by many as a homage to the contribution of Christian communities to Arab culture and civilisation.

In an introduction to the book, Prof. Noth wrote: "Crown Prince Al Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan gives an informative account of the origins of Christianity and its historical, organisational and doctrinal development, explaining the emergence of the Christian communities of the area, and their special standing and contribution as non-Muslims who have historically coexisted with Muslims and shared in their civilisation."

King instructs Majali to focus on domestic issues

Royal letter of designation outlines difficulties facing Jordan, tasks of new government and calls for conducting free, fair legislative elections

Following is an unofficial translation of His Majesty King Hussein's Letter of Designation to Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali entrusting him with the formation of the new government:

I greet you with love, trust and appreciation.

I have always known you as a loyal soldier and a companion who has dedicated himself to the service of the nation honourably and loyally. I have experienced your distinguished contribution since you were an officer in the army, and then as head of the Royal Medical Services, president of the University of Jordan, head of the Jordanian peace delegation as well as other like responsibilities at different positions, the latest being the post of Prime Minister. In all the positions you occupied, you were exemplary in your allegiance, integrity and altruism which won you my trust and the appreciation of our one big Jordanian family.

Over the past few years, our dear Jordan has passed through several transformations and, thank God and the efforts of its loyal citizens, it overcame several hardships. Due to the distraction caused by major problems and the critical stage through which our region has been passing, we were unable to concentrate on our domestic affairs until we found ourselves faced with large accumulations of negative aspects which are obstructing our march and are standing in the way of achieving our aspirations and ambitions in building an exemplary country, a state of institutions and the sovereignty of law, an oasis of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights, a Jordan belonging to its nation and honouring its responsibility towards it and its peoples, an advocate of human causes, a Jordan that is capable of evolving and meeting the requirements of the age and opening to the world around it.

To achieve this aspired noble cause, we should concentrate on domestic affairs and must uproot the accumulated negative aspects that impede the path of progress.

At the top of these accumulations and challenges facing us is ridding the government institutions of inefficiency, loss of vitality and inability to effect change, to develop and to modernise. We must base our plan on objectivity and must search for qualified, energetic, loyal and honourable citizens of this dear nation and appoint them in the proper places, enabling them to use their potentials in the service of the homeland. This must be coupled with a process of purifying these institutions of all the inactive, inefficient and disloyal elements which shielded themselves in their positions, standing in the face of all young, loyal, efficient elements that are capable of serving and developing. We are not trying to sever people's means of livelihood nor harm any one. But we seek to get rid of all that might impede our progress and does not support and enrich it with hard work and perseverance. We seek to get rid of those who view senior public posts as a personal gain enabling them to achieve trivial goals at the expense of national interests or at the expense of citizens' rights and the services that the state should offer, which are the citizens' right and a trust we hold for them. Unfortunately, these elements not only exist in senior positions, but they subsist at various levels of public service. This requires a comprehensive review of the standards, principles and regulations governing public work in the various departments according to well-studied scientific basis that place the higher national interest above all other considerations.

Through experience, we found out that having deputies serving as ministers is something that has several negative aspects, as the citizens themselves also discovered, since they have suffered from its consequences. This makes us review this issue. A deputy should devote his time to his parliamentary responsibilities and a minister should devote his time to his ministerial responsibilities, without having any of them falling under electoral, geographic or personal pressures, no matter what their causes or results are. This would better serve our democratic process and help it take roots and protect it from any deviation from its right path.

Naturally, all this requires that the main considerations in selecting ministers or officials in leading senior positions should be proficiency, loyalty and honesty, regardless of other considerations that give posts to those who are not worthy of them.

Jordan, thank God, is full of distinguished qualified youth who are full of enthusiasm to perform promising work compassionately. It is time to give these young people the chance to realise their potentials and exploit their knowledge, education and experience in serving their country and in pushing the wheel of its development and progress forward.

Throughout this long, arduous journey, we have accomplished a lot of achievements at the domestic and foreign levels, which made our experience in this genuine Arab land a source of appreciation and respect by all. Naturally, this does not mean that we close our eyes to defects, dereliction and immobility. Pinpointing the malfunctions and admitting wrong-doing are more honourable than ignoring them and trying to justify or defend them, and courage in facing truth is more honourable than escaping reality or trying to beautify it under any pretext.

We hope that the upcoming parliamentary elections we are preparing for will produce a distinguished host of citizens who will represent their electorate in the best way, who will act as the citizens' voice, conscience and feelings, who are full of love of this country, belonging to it and readiness to sacrifice the dearest for its sake.

Accordingly, I entrust you — along with your colleagues who will shoulder with you the burden of responsibility — with conducting these elections in a free and fair manner that would not cause any suspicions or incite calls for intervention by any party, just as was the case in elections that took place in earlier years and which were a true example of fairness. I am truly hopeful that all citizens who are keen to safeguard the country's interests and rights will take part in selecting their representatives and will practise their electoral right freely according to their convictions, the dictates of their conscience and true belonging.

Your Excellency,

The fact that your government's main job will be holding the aforementioned parliamentary elections does not at all mean that this is its sole mission, and does not mean waiting until after the conclusion of these elections to start the process of building and serious work in the various fields. The problems we are suffering from, particularly at the internal level, are numerous. The people's suffering has reached a level that these problems should not be left without tackling. Unemployment, the swelling of poverty pockets, the exacerbating administrative problems, economic recession, the chaos in the educational system and the failure to link education with the society's needs as well as corruption and favouritism are all issues that need swift action and remedy.

Every citizen in our one Jordanian family is like a son, brother and companion, regardless of origin. Citizens are my family and tribe which I pride myself in. I am keen to devote every moment in my life to achieving their noble aspirations. They are the loyal ones who sacrificed for the building of our dear Jordan. It is their right to have the means of a kind living, for them and for their children, in a climate of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights, and in a framework of brotherly relations, national unity, tolerance, social integration and equality as guaranteed by the constitution and the law.

At the foreign level, I stress three substantial points:

The first is our commitment to the peace process and keenness to support it to enable it to overcome all that might impede its progress at the various levels until the achievement of comprehensive and lasting peace which would enable the region's people to live a secure and honourable life. In this context I emphasise our continued support of our Palestinian brethren until they become able to retrieve their rights and establish their state on their national soil.

Secondly, Jordan has been and will remain committed to the causes of its Arab Nation, keen on its unity, a champion of its rights, dealing with all Arab brethren in a pure spirit and brotherly manner, disregarding all minor and short-lived disputes, seeking all that would unify the nation's ranks and resolving disputes among its states in protection of their rights and the future of the coming generations.

Thirdly, Jordan managed over the past decades to establish a network of distinguished relations with the world countries in the various continents, based on its policy of openness to the world and benefiting from the world's achievements and civilisation, while at the same time preserving our national and pan-Arab identity from all that might affect its essence or harm its pure image. Thus we seek to strengthen relations with the world around us and protect our achievements in this field.

Based on all this, I entrust your excellency in whom I have my absolute trust with forming the government which, God willing, will be able to shoulder its responsibilities. You and your colleagues who will be selected will have my full support and backing. And thus I will wait until you provide me with the names of your colleagues in the Cabinet.

Al Hussein

'I was shocked to know that your weeping minister had more effect on you than watching the suffering children,' King tells Kabariti in letter approving his resignation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday issued a Royal Decree accepting the resignation of Abdul Karim Kabariti's government as of March 19, 1997 and sent the outgoing prime minister the following letter:

Dear Mr. Kabariti,

I have received the letter of resignation of your government while the country is at the stage of preparing for new general elections facing new challenges and developments, a stage that requires change and revival.

While accepting the resignation of your government, I would like to express to you and your team deep appreciation and gratitude for your work and efforts for Jordan and the Jordanian people and for the duty you performed with our full backing in the face of the storms and along the road leading towards our objectives.

I refer to your letter in which you attributed the strength of the outgoing government to the Hashemite leadership and I would like to reaffirm that it is so and will continue to be the same leadership which realises its serious responsibilities and to which I feel proud to be affiliated. I will take pride in being affiliated to Jordan and its people all my life. I also feel proud to have entrusted my brother and Crown Prince to assume the task of supporting all the government's efforts in the economic fields.

The beginning of your mission was very promising. I know what responsibility means and to whom it is entrusted and I know the impact of this responsibility and the responsible persons and the troubles besieging them. If these troubles burden them they will flounder and lose the sense of direction.

I have felt these consequences and their impact on you and your government. As recently as a few days ago I was about to undertake changes and improvements required by the present stage of democracy. Your name was at the top of a list of candidates who will shoulder responsibility in the next stage. But the question was: Are you in a position that enables you to continue and to forge ahead in offering service and whether are you the same young fellow who I had selected to lead a government in the previous stage?

"You no doubt come from a pure breed but the experience of the harsh days seems to have adversely affected you. In confronting the troubles and the hard days you have chosen to concentrate particularly in the media on your image as a prime minister

in every problem. I have an excuse for you being a person who is exhausted to a degree that you have; abandoned tackling the basics for which I have originally chosen you. These basics being the restructuring of the state's administration on the basis of efficiency and competence and sound action which can benefit the country and its people.

You remember, brother, that I have chosen you to accompany me to Al Hussein Medical Centre where we together watched the little girl whose life has been rescued after having suffered from poor health care. We saw her frightened in her bed, afraid of any person approaching her because she has suffered a great deal from lack of humanitarian care throughout her long illness that almost killed her had I not intervened after hearing of her condition.

I took you with me to her bedside hoping that you will take speedy measures to see her treated and to see appropriate treatment to all the orphaned children of this country who have suffered a great deal and who had hoped to get care from this state and from the institute that bore my name: Al Hussein Welfare Institution.

But when nothing happened, I took you along with me to visit the institution where we together toured the different sections and saw what people watched on television. Later I sent you a letter asking that the Hashemiyeh Palace be transformed into a home for the innocent and poor children where they can live happily laughing and receiving and enjoying good care for the first time. This is their right and the palace should be theirs instead of remaining as a guest house for a state that had neglected them for so long, something that does not honour any one.

As to the responsible minister I had referred to at the time he is one of this country who had served in the Armed Forces. The problem and tragedy did not start with this minister. It was the outcome of accumulation of years of irresponsible bureaucratic and weak and ineffective administration.

What pained me most was to see you defending the tragic situation prevailing in the institutions that care for the children and the performance of the minister. I was also pained to witness this minister defending his achievements which failed to change the picture which, I, you and the rest of the people saw.

Last night when we met I informed you of my decision to change your government and I was shocked to hear your reply in which you said that your minister weeping before you had more effect on you than watching the suffering children. May God forgive you and forgive him.

I am not used to sending such letters to former prime ministers when they tender their resignations, but your lengthy letter of resignation and your contradictions, at a time when you talk about democracy and freedom, have compelled me to write to you in this manner.

I excuse you and hope that you will enjoy rest and resume your work as a loyal Jordanian on whom I always pinned great hopes but who has been overburdened by the great weight of responsibility. I hope you will continue to serve as a model of good morals and human values without which life can be meaningless.

I send you my affection and I will continue to hope that you will benefit from future chances. Only God does not err. It is only the fortunate and sensible person who admits his blunders, not who persists in justifying mistakes.

Majali stresses his government will safeguard justice, equality, democracy and human rights

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali sent the following letter to His Majesty King Hussein in reply to the King's letter designating him to form a new government:

Your Majesty,

I have received your letter entrusting me to form a new government with deep gratitude and with a feeling of responsibility and honour.

The designation of this mission coincides with a moment in which the whole region is going through a stage of development and at a time when Your Majesty is exerting relentless efforts to protect stability and our country is passing through a crucial stage which requires your guidance and wisdom.

My government will concentrate its efforts in the domestic front on enhancing democracy and constructing a civic society to be founded on justice, transparency, equality and will exert all its efforts to ensure that the general elections will be held on schedule and in a fair and free manner hoping they will yield the best representatives of the nation to assume responsibility and help the executive authority with its mission.

I have followed Your Majesty's efforts in the past few weeks and your keenness on caring for the orphaned children and the weak. We take inspiration of your love and your determination to work to ensure that we offer all help to the weak and the orphans, responding to their needs.

In order to support and enhance Jordanian citizens' security and back their efforts to build the country, we will remove all obstacles in the path of Jordanian, Arab and foreign investments in Jordan.

The civic society can only succeed when its public administration enjoys good qualifications and civil servants enjoy a decent living and this requires legislation of new laws.

My government will support the judicial authority and train new cadres as we realise Your Majesty's concern over this issue because this can help lay the foundation of justice which can fight off corruption so that people may be reassured of their rights.

Inspired by your directives, we will do all we can to deal with inefficiency in the public administration system and will raise the level of performance and reduce routine that impedes production and progress.

My government will introduce incentives for the creative and promising civil servants, reduce routine work and do all we can to make our civil service a model for others. We intend to address poverty, encourage investments, create new jobs, carry out the economic restructuring programme, privatise institutions and encourage the private sector to play its role in development.

We live in a rapidly changing world whose borders are shrinking and in which knowledge and science is developing fast. We find it incumbent on us to deal with the new requirements and pursue efforts to join the World Trade Organisation and to enter into partnership with the European Union.

We intend to pursue efforts to develop the educational process, and the cultural and informational programmes and contain the negative aspects.

We realise that the comprehensive development process can only be achieved by training our workforce and so we plan to create an institution to rehabilitate the Jordanian workforce and find employment for Jordanians.

We seek to enable our educational institutions to graduate well-trained personnel capable of serving their nation. We will provide a national health service to all citizens by creating an institution to provide a comprehensive health insurance service.

Under your leadership we seek to pursue the steps to complete the peace which you started for the benefit of the coming generations and create opportunities that were denied to our generation which faced wars and conflicts. We seek just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy and based on exchanging land for peace.

Jerusalem should be returned and should not bow to any sovereignty except that of God. We reject all measures that change its status before the final negotiations. Jerusalem should serve as a meeting place for all monotheistic religions and an oasis of security and peace for all the children of Abraham.

We will support the Palestinian brothers with all our might so that they can regain their legitimate rights on their own national soil.

The new government will work towards upholding Arab causes, safeguarding Arab dignity and maintaining the highest degree of balanced relations with all the Arab states.

Jordan will be for all Arabs supporting their causes and will back all the pan-Arab institutions and will consecrate efforts to bolster inter-Arab relations in all fields.

We vow to defend the Arab and Islamic causes and confront all unjust campaigns against Islam and Arabs and deepen our dialogue with other cultures and religions.

We will give due attention to the armed forces seeking to give them all that they need to remain ready and capable of defending our nation.

I have the great honour to serve Your Majesty in this critical stage of our life and to ensure that justice, equality democracy and human rights will be respected and duly preserved.

In resignation letter, Kabariti says he carried out every instruction of the King and that he had always upheld honesty, dialogue and non-compromise over the truth

AMMAN (Petra) — Following is the text of the letter of resignation which Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti submitted to His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday announcing the resignation of his government:

After Your Majesty honoured me by asking me to form the government beginning last year, I was filled with pride and satisfaction to realise and be assured that I have achieved the height of my hopes and the dearest of my wishes, not because I became prime minister but because I won your absolute trust and the highest honour in choosing me as the guardian of your reign, the executor of your wishes and the protector of the state secrets and by being considered by you to be fit to shoulder the national responsibility with you and by your side. My goal was nothing but to work, build, correct, hold on to the promising future and depend on myself in order to execute the spirit of your message in serving the truth, justice, honesty and equality within the framework of responsible democracy.

I have shouldered the trust with my colleagues, the members of government, as you have wished of us. We did not worry about ourselves during the good or bad times and did not care but for the truth and to raising your banner and achieving your contentment. We thank God that all that we have achieved of success was with the direction of Your Majesty and your satisfaction.

As for the problems that we faced, they were a result of my own resolution, estimation and doing. I thank God I was absolved by the vow I took in front of you. You will not find from me, by God's will, but the truth in words and deeds for I have met my vow to you that no one but Your Majesty is my endowment.

I have not bargained with my commitment to the vow I took in your service. With your unprecedented backing, the government entered into fierce battles that placed us at the borders of danger whilst on the road to rectifying, repairing and fighting all forms of corruption wherever it is regardless of its source. This has won me the hostility in the eyes of a small and stubborn group of people who have voiced condemnation and malediction I have never heard in my life. Yet I did not bargain nor assent.

Dialogue, clarity, honesty and courage remained my path while depending on your support and my own convictions.

I have always been proud and confident that bargaining and appeasement are not the road to the minds of Jordanians; the road is honesty and debate, depending by that on their sense of recognising and pinpointing honesty.

We have succeeded, as a government team, along with our colleagues in the Lower and Upper Houses of parliament, to overcome problems with deliberation, honesty and confrontation which have never turned into a conflict.

We have all descended down to earth and to the grounds of deliberation away from generalisation, and as a result, our reasoning was expanded, our horizons opened and the pressure of sentiments was released.

The democracy which you nourished has succeeded even though a group remained steadfast in the caves of their locked minds. There is no harm in that, isn't this the case with all democracies in the world?

I may have at times lacked the wit of politicians, but I've never lacked honesty and courage.

I chose to speak and do with no fear, for I've never known fear yet, and will never know it in the future.

I will always remain a student of your national and Islamic school with colleagues and brothers in the cabinet.

We have stood up to many problems and there remain more and bigger problems which need to be addressed. We wanted all citizens to realise the dimensions of these problems and their roles in talking them. We wanted all to abandon the negativity of not being in touch with the problems or considering them as external ones. The response from the majority was wonderful and responsible, but it was not an easy matter.

As I do not wish to exaggerate, I do not wish to undermine the size of problems and the challenges which await our country, trusting that this country and its citizens are at the height of national responsibility in facing challenges with patience, work, planning and honest implementation.

There remain again the few who only think of their own selves and interests. Waiting for those to fall in harmony with the doctrine and to join the majority may take long. That may force us to act beyond our wishes. Resolving this problem is a sensitive and complex matter. But the picture, my lord, is bright and shining.

With ingenious futuristic pioneering, Your Majesty was able to raise the monuments and rebuild the pillars of national building, every time they were harmed, through renewal, change and insurrection.

Finally, my lord, I have worked hard with everyone with no exception in the framework of my belonging to Your Majesty.

By all means, perfection was not achieved and there were many parties and issues which I could not deal with and which sometimes had compelled me to shift from action to counter action and to entrenchment, which I did not like. This had tired me but has not reduced my loyalty, belonging and adherence to the path you have drawn for me and for the ministerial team which worked with me with the highest degree of commitment and performance.

Since the next stage is the stage of preparation for elections, leading to new challenges and changes, I find it my duty to propose to Your Majesty to look into renewal and change which may return this country wealth and prosperity and thus I hereby submit to you the resignation of my government. My gain is your trust. I bid farewell by my vow to you, and I will always remain a servant loyal to your throne.

Abdul Karim Kabariti
March 19, 1997

Sustainability stressed as key element to build micro-finance practice in Jordan

By Ghalia Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan micro-finance conference wrapped up Wednesday with participants stressing the importance of building a sustainable micro-finance practice in the country.

Sustainability could not be achieved unless operational and financial costs of micro-finance programmes are covered, participants asserted during the closing ceremony of the conference sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank and the European Union (EU).

"Donors would not be around us forever, they are usually unreliable. We need to find ways to be independent," Judith Brandsma, private sector development specialist at the World Bank, told participants referring to the importance of cost coverage as the main key for a sustainable micro-finance project.

Participants also emphasised the need to reach out to a large number of low income groups and provide them with quality financial and business development services.

However, micro-finance consultant Karl Jensen warned that "none of these issues should be tackled in isolation."

"If you don't have a good management information system you cannot maximise the outreach nor can you achieve sustainability," he emphasised.

The three-day conference, which aimed at promoting dialogue among micro-finance practitioners, raised questions about the high interest rates charged on loans.

Some participants, taking the cause of low income people who would not be able to repay the loans, expressed opposition to high interest rates.

Richard Rosenberg, senior advisor at the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP), told a press conference following the meeting that, however, interest rates ensure the sustainability of a micro-finance project because donors are not always available for financing.

"We have learned over the years that if we want these programmes to reach large numbers of poor people, there are prices that have to be paid. One of them is that you have to pursue loan collection very vigorously because there is no collateral," Mr. Rosenberg said.

He explained that "people are motivated to repay their loans in order to have continued access to these loans for as long as they want."

Jorgen Lissner, UNDP resident representative in Jordan, told the Jordan Times in an interview that although interest rates could be higher than those charged at commercial banks, poor people get higher return on their money.

"A big businessman can get three, five to ten per cent return on his investment, but we forget that poor people could get 50 to 100 per cent return on their investments," he said.

"To first ask what is the interest rate is wrong. We should ask what is the return for a poor person taking a JD 100 loan," Mr. Lissner added.

Charity vs commercialism

Focusing on Jordan, Mr. Lissner said "nothing much has been done for people who do not need charity and, at the same time, are not as well off to borrow from banks."

"We are talking about a huge area between charity and commercialism where tens of thousands of Jordanian people find themselves(trapped)," Mr. Lissner said.

One of the problems that impede sustainability of micro-finance projects in Jordan, Mr. Lissner said, is the "tradition of loan forgiveness."

"There is nothing wrong with that approach except that it creates a culture, where a loan is not quite a loan but a gift in disguise," he added.

"IF you cannot cover your costs you cannot create a sustainable scheme," Mr. Lissner asserted.

Therefore, he added, "what we are trying to do with our Jordanian colleagues from NGOs is to see if we can come up with a scheme, or more than one scheme, which will address the need of the poor in a sustainable way."

Taleb Rifai, director general of the Investment Promotion Corporation (IPC), told journalists that small and medium enterprises "are the main pillar of our economy."

However, he added, "the legal framework, under which tax exemptions and project support are granted, is designed to only serve big and medium investments."

"The problem of small projects is not limited to financing as its implementation is also based on providing the suitable climate, said Dr. Rifai.

CARE International country representative Jonathan Patrick stressed that micro-credit should be viewed as a development tool.

Mr. Patrick, whose organisation focuses on group lending for women, said that "micro-credit is a very efficient way to create jobs in Jordan."

He told the Jordan Times in an interview that "tangible benefits" of micro-finance projects are often ignored.

He pointed out that such benefits can be measured through permanent increase in income, increase in self confidence and group solidarity.

This conference comes less than six weeks after the Washington micro-credit summit which brought together more than 2,000 participants from all over the world.

The conference made a commitment that by the year 2005, micro-credit would be extended to 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families. Mr. Lissner said that UNDP has announced a $41 million MicroStart project at the Washington micro-credit summit.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates — Prices as at 19/03/97 20:10

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.5831	0.6262	1.4462	122.75	1.3780	1687.30	1.8950	5.6782
DE Mark	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
GB Sterling	1.5970	2.6885	-	2.3107	195.82	2.2007	2695.63	3.0275	9.0715
CH Franc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
JP Yen	0.0081	1.3698	0.5095	1.1772	-	1.1223	13.73	154.22	4.6221
CA Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
IT Lira	0.0006	0.9968	0.3707	0.0857	1376.08	0.8165	-	11.22	3.3633
NL Guilder	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]
FR Franc	0.1761	0.2962	0.1102	25.4649	21.60	0.2427	33.34	33.3400	-

Energy

Oils	Last	Previous
Brent	19.90	20.45
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bony	19.90	20.45
Dubai	[illegible]	[illegible]
UL Gas	199.00	199.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4490	0.1669	0.38579	32.7579
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
KW Dinar	3.2971	5.55247	2.06356	4.77099	405.022
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CY Pound	1.9748	3.3229	1.2361	2.8557	242.422

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	350.5	351
Silver (oz's)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Platinum (oz's)	376.75	377.75
Au (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]
CU (3 Months)	2324	2325
Zinc (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lead (3 Months)	690	691
Ni (3 Months)	[illegible]	[illegible]

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Period / C'ncy	- 1 - Month	- 3 - Months	- 6 - Months	- 9 - Months	- 1 - Year
USD	5.50	5.51	5.68	5.82	5.97
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
JPY	0.38	0.38	0.59	0.46	0.65
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
FRF	3.22	3.27	3.36	3.44	3.81
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ITL	7.38	7.40	7.34	7.25	7.28

Main Equity Indicies

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	6841.8	-54.76	-0.79	6913.94	6841.8	6896.56
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
London	FT-SE 100	4332.2	-24.6	-0.56	4371.4	4331.4	4356.8
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paris	CAC 40	2596.77	22.82	0.89	2599.22	2577.45	2573.95
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 1997

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try to get some suggestions from persons today who are successful in your own area of business. If you have to make a trip, be sure to watch your budget, so that you won't be short of funds in an emergency.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can easily convince others today to join you in a new venture which will increase your assets. Talk over any difficulties with your mate later this evening so that there won't be any difficulties ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Do a small favour today which will bring you the respect of a superior. Later this evening is a good time to work on improving your health and appearance so that you will get noticed by those in authority.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Sit down for a chat today with a clever fellow associate, and come to a fine and profitable agreement. Enjoy your loved ones later this evening and relax for the days ahead because they are going to be hectic with career activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make some plans for an amusement with your closest friends today and thereby you can all enjoy yourselves. Don't take any unnecessary risks while driving on the highway or in motion of any kind if you can help it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find a method of operation today to make your home more as you and your loved ones would like it. If you invite guests in later this evening, make sure they are completely trustworthy so you can avoid any difficulties.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Bring those persons back into your life today whom you have been neglecting lately. Something will happen today to make your days ahead brighter, so keep an eye out for the opportunity and make the best of it.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Pay special attention to money matters today, and you'll get excellent results. An expert can give you some very valuable business advice so it would be to your advantage to pay attention to what is provided.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get together with some friends who have the same hobbies as you today and have a good time together. Be sure to drive carefully while on the highway and thereby avoid any difficulties you could encounter.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't confide your personal plans to others today, and don't do anything which might damage your reputation. Be considerate of your mate later this evening and thereby you can have a pleasurable time together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you contact good friends and state your aims clearly today, they will help you make real progress. Be sure to show your appreciation to close friends and thereby you can get into recreational activities which are fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You can gain many benefits through a community project at this time. Relax at home with your mate later this evening, and get plenty of rest for in the days ahead you will have plenty of career activities.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Although you are busy with business matters today, a new interest may arise which will make you a much happier and relaxed person. This evening will be good for you to spend this time with your loved ones and just relax.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Although a fellow associate may have ideas different from your own today, you can labour together quite well. Don't make any promises you can keep or you could damage your reputation which has taken much time to establish.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study every angle of your daily routines today, and find a way to increase your output. Don't rely too much on others this evening or could be disappointed with the results. This is a good time to go out on the town with friends.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Add some excitement to your duties today, and you'll get better result from your efforts. Be sure to accept any good ideas from fellow associates which can make your career activities much more beneficial.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may receive an invitation today which will lift your spirits considerably. Invite only interesting and exciting persons into your home tonight and you can have a wonderful time together in each others company.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Shopping and running errands could annoy you today, however, a family friend will cheer you up. Be careful in giving out advice later this evening or you could discover that much difficulty could come about.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It is good to be conscientious in your career activities today, however, leave time for recreation. Don't talk about financial matters with strangers later this evening or you could discover you have been tricked.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Take care of your personal duties this morning, however, don't neglect practical affairs. You should not hesitate to discuss your difficulties with friends since they could come up with solutions which you hadn't considered.

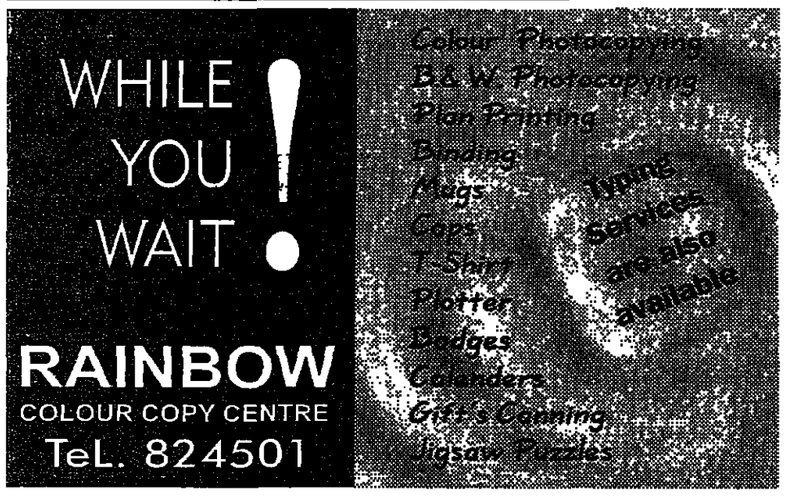
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to look at your situation in a more positive light today and you won't feel so depressed. Doing your best will be more than enough. Later this evening you can meet with knowledgeable people and gain good advice.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have to put up with a boring person today, however, your patience will be greatly rewarded. Enjoy your loved ones later this evening and thereby make your residence a much more pleasant location.

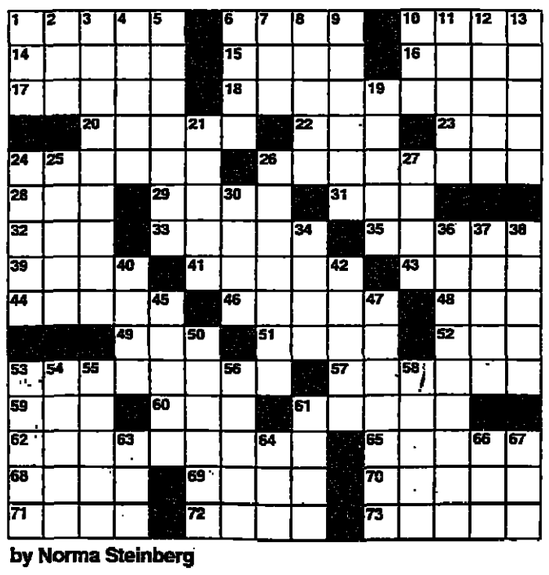
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Do whatever is necessary today to improve your credit situation. A close friend will make it possible for you to have a good time later this evening. This is a good time to meet with fellow associate and complete any new projects.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You need more information today before you can handle a new project wisely. Make note of any suggestions you get so that you won't forget them and use the best ones on your career activities to be successful.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper.



THE Daily Crossword



by Norma Steinberg

ACROSS
1 — we trust
6 Apex
10 Add seasoning
14 Dudley or Mary Tyler
15 Social affairs
16 Dairy case item
17 Likely to
18 Gridiron score
20 One of Snow White's friends
22 Chou En—
23 Convene
24 Baby feline
26 After-dinner coffee
28 Ms. Lupino
29 E.R.A., e.g.
31 Nosh
32 Fleur-de—
33 More faithful
35 En — (all together)
39 Toddlers
41 Mistake
43 Govt. agt.
44 Cook without oil
46 Diarist Nin
48 Certain time letters
49 Jewel
51 Part of the foot
52 Commit perjury
53 Substance
57 Medicine man
59 Actor Wallach
60 Manhattan, for one: abbr.
61 — firma
62 Tourist
65 Handbag
68 Yearn
69 Ready for
70 Lessen
71 Matched collections
72 Take off
73 Half man/half goat

DOWN
1 Sprite
2 Neither's partner
3 Discrimination
4 Whether —
5 Most profound
6 Lawyer: abbr.
7 Company VIP
8 Handles roughly
9 Get away from
10 Turf
11 At — for words
12 Explorer Meriwether
13 The Lone Ranger's sidekick
19 King of Tyre
21 — nous
24 Highlands wear
25 Dope
26 Timeless
27 Coup d'—
30 Distinctive quality
34 Leonine sound
36 Be suspicious
37 — Hawkins Day
38 Go in
40 Turkey stuffing herb
42 Nouveau —
45 Deserve
47 Nepalese natives
50 Wife, familiarly
53 Tablelands
54 Carroll's heroine
55 Close-fitting
56 Hebrew letter
58 Curacao's neighbor
61 Stepped on
63 Males
64 Riviera summer
66 Filthy place
67 Always, to poets

J	A	C	K		W	H	A	M		T	U	F	A	S
O	X	E	N		H	U	G	O		S	N	A	R	L
G	O	R	E		O	M	E	N		A	E	R	I	E
S	N	O	W	E	D	U	N	D	E	R		F	O	E
				M	U	S	T	E	R		B	E	S	T
G	I	B	B	O	N				S	T	A	T	E	S
N	O	E	L		I	O	T	A		E	T	C		
U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R
		R	E	Y		S	E	E	M		L	E	G	O
C	H	A	P	E	L				P	L	E	D	G	E
R	A	G	S		M	A	R	T	H	A				
E	N	G		U	N	D	E	R	A	C	L	O	U	D
O	G	L	E	S		O	N	U	S		U	P	T	O
L	O	E	W	E		P	E	R	I		B	A	E	Z
E	N	D	E	D		T	W	O	S		E	L	S	E

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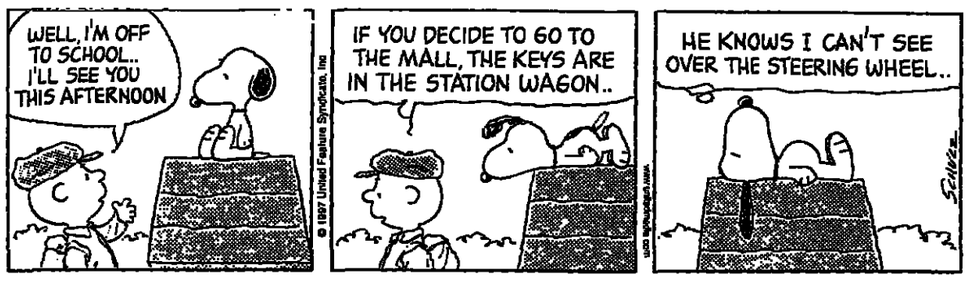
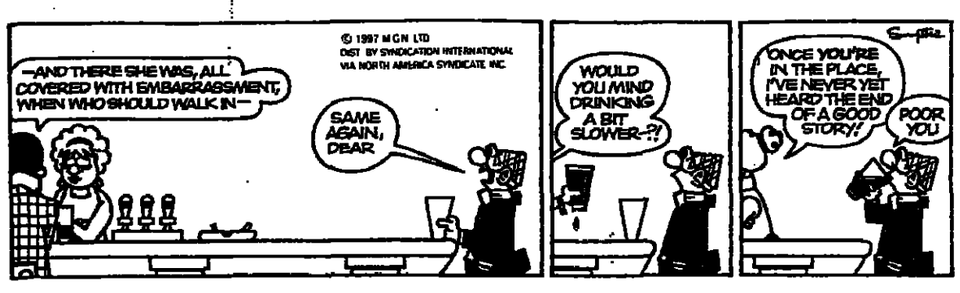
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

Jordanian businesses see ISO certification as means to counter economic challenges

By Sacha Baggili
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The growing trend amongst private Jordanian companies to exert efforts for international standard certification, was Wednesday described as a step which will enhance the Kingdom's abilities to counter national and international economic challenges.

This was the predominant view which emanated from comments made by company representatives, government officials and trade experts attending Expo Jordan 1997, formally opened by HRH Prince Faisal Wednesday.

The four-day exhibition displays the products and business activities of Jordanian companies which have acquired or are in the *process of acquiring* International Standard Organisation (ISO) certification.

"This exhibition stresses the importance of elevating services and productivity to international standards which thereby augment the country's national and international competitive capacities," said Jordan Businessmen Association Chairman Hamdi Tabbaa, at the exhibition which was opened by HRH Prince Faisal.

He referred to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (EMP) which officials predict will be concluded between Jordan and the European Union in April, and Jordan's preparation to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO), as accentuating the necessity of promoting international standard certification.

According to Nancy Bakir, assistant secretary general to the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) , 40 companies are taking part in this week's exhibition. *Twenty-two of these are* already certified and the remainder are in the process of ISO examination.

"The exhibition aims to encourage ISO certified companies to promote themselves locally and internationally, and to provide a platform for interaction between academics, economists, industrialists and government officials," she said.

Ms. Bakir told the Jordan Times that such a platform aims to instigate further research, and enhance understanding of and support for ISO 9000, certification.

ISO 9000 which is a certification indicating satisfaction of a management quality test and is designed to ensure full satisfaction of customer requirements, can be attained under three categories. These three categories are "ISO 9001," for design and installation (often sought after by service industries), "ISO 9002," for companies actually manufacturing a product (the most common amongst those already bestowed upon Jordanian companies) and finally "ISO 9003," for primary testing organisations.

In April 1994, it was decided by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the HCST board of directors that efforts should be exerted *to encourage greater* development in science, technology and industry.

As part of a programme adopted for this purpose, a fund was established to help small and medium-sized enterprises obtain international certification and thereby facilitate greater trade, and advancements in the fields of industry, science and technology.

According to Ms Bakir, JD 370, 000 has been allocated especially for ISO 9000 projects in the past two years, from which 32 companies have benefited. Eleven of these enterprises have already been accredited with the certification as a result of aid channelled from the HCST. In an opening address at the exhibition's opening ceremony, former HCST Secretary General Hani Mulki (now minister of industry, trade and supply) said that most of the goals set two years ago by government ministries and national institutions have been achieved "in terms of supporting national industries, *improving production capacities,* improving the quality of industries and improving the technical and human resources in these industries."

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply Secretary General Mohammad Smadi told the audience of Jordanian businessmen that the national economy must be prepared to "integrate gradually into the global economy, expand economic activity, open markets for national exports and improve internal capabilities," adding that international certification of Jordanian companies was a necessity for such objectives to be met.

In January 1997, Peter Gibb, operations manager of Global Certification Ltd, an approved British organisation qualified to assess companies for ISO 9000, told this reporter that in essence, ISO certification requests that customer requirements are clearly defined,' procedures are extensively documented and that a company has the right resources to satisfy requirements.

"In short, a certification body looks at a company with the eyes of all customers," he explained.

He further commented that he has been "extremely impressed by the commitment shown by the organisations" which he has assessed in Jordan.

Subsequent to achieving certification, companies are reassessed every six months to ensure that regulations are still being followed, and to consider any company procedural advances which need to be documented.

Eva Aranki, who has worked as a freelance consultant aiding some of the Jordanian companies in preparing for the tough scrutiny of the ISO 9000 examination, told the Jordan Times Wednesday that ISO certification is not just a label for the advancement of a company's marketing capacity.

"By making use of ISO's management system internal auditing is improved and efficiency in its operations is heightened," she asserted.Kristina Sawalha, a managing partner of Jordan Lift and Crane Manufacturers (JOLIFT)—the very first Jordanian company to be bestowed with the certification, told the Jordan Times that although the company sought ISO 9000 certification "as a result of a belief that it was becoming a necessity" for the preservation and expansion of its international marketing, they were reaping the benefits of an improved management system and greater overall efficiency.

According to Ms. Bakir, the HCST, which has a board of trustees including officials from the Ministry of Planning, Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Coorporation (JEDCO), Amman Chamber of Commerce, the Jordanian Institute for Standards Meteorology and other government institutions, is currently in the process of evaluating its ISO 9000 policy and setting new principles for grants to companies in accordance with its findings.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDENSDAY 19/03/1997

	PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
	269.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.36	9	180	45670	252.00	256.50	4.50+
N	2.100	1.860	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	E	0.00	10	3150	5915	1.92	1.87	.05-
	3.650	2.800	BANK OF JORDAN	10.1	0.00	4	2900	8112	2.84	2.80	.04-
	1.210 -	.880	MID.EAST INV.BK.	67.0	0.00	2	1200	1222	1.01	1.02	.01+
	2.610	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV.BK.	5.2	6.11	3	750	1708	2.25	2.28	.03+
	5.150	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.4	2.98	6	2000	9280	4.61	4.63	.02.
	2.950	2.440	JOR.KUWAIT BANK	19.8	0.00	10	6665	18093	2.70	2.73	.03+
	1.090	.840	JOR.GULF BANK	5.1	8.24	5	5500	4675	.84	.85	.01+
	4.120	3.480	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	18.2	0.00	2	550	2080	3.79	3.79	-
+	2.850	1.420	BEIT.AL-MAL (BEITNA)	.9	10.95	9	2050	2860	1.42	1.37	.05-
	BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 193.99	%CHG: +1.23	60	24945	99613			
+	2.600	2.550	ARAB UNI.INTL.INSUR.	5.6	0.00	1	250	605	2.55	2.42	.13-
	INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 119.12	%CHG: 0.00	1	250	605			
	1.830	1.450	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	11.4	7.27	8	6450	10626	1.64	1.65	.01+
I	6.950	6.000	VHCLS. OWNERS FED.	7.6	5.03	1	150	1044	6.63	6.96	.33+
	1.540	1.060	NATL. PORTFOLIO	g	0.00	21	10750	11716	1.08	1.10	.02+
	1.050	.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	22.2	3.73	2	5500	5495	.99	1.00	.01+
	.800	.410	MACH.EQP.RENT.MAIN.	g	0.00	4	1700	827	.48	.50	.02+
	3.720	3.040	ARAB INTL.INV.EDUC.	12.6	6.29	12	2450	7662	3.04	3.18	.14+
	1.220	.960	ZARKA EDUCATION	g	0.00	8	1745	1744	.99	1.00	.01+
	2.230	1.650	UNIFIED CO.	8.2	6.36	33	16091	27661	1.68	1.73	.05+
	SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 104.86	%CHG: +1.26	89	44836	66773			
	3.730	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	20.6	2.77	10	3309	11921	3.63	3.61	.02-
	6.100	4.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	18.2	3.33	2	650	3900	6.00	6.00	-
	10.400	8.720	JOR. PETROL.REFINARY	10.3	7.87	10	1511	15354	10.15	10.16	.01+
	1.590	1.150	WOOLEN INDUSTRIES	60.8	0.00	2	250	341	1.37	1.37	-
	3.330	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COMM.AGR.	32.8	0.00	10	1200	2932	2.47	2.44	.03-
	7.950	6.420	JOR.WORSTED MILLS	8.8	3.65	2	1000	6850	6.85	6.85	-
	4.110	3.040	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	20.5	5.35	7	1106	4066	3.67	3.74	.07+
	7.250	5.650	JOR.CERAMIC IND.	8.3	3.73	2	150	1005	6.77	6.70	.07-
	2.430	2.050	JORDAN DAIRY	15.0	6.12	3	240	586	2.43	2.45	.02+
	6.600	4.250	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	13.4	4.08	13	21688	106385	4.80	4.90	.10+
	5.450	3.130	ARAB ALUM.IND.	8.0	9.32	5	3500	11098	3.20	3.22	.02+
	.960	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	g	0.00	35	43650	25360	.58	.59	.01+
	1.020	.540	NATIONAL INDS.	9.2	9.68	2	850	527	.62	.62	-
	1.540	.870	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	21	11600	10308	.88	.91	.03+
	1.670	1.080	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	27.0	0.00	19	6400	9107	1.41	1.44	.03+
	2.740	1.440	UNIV. MODN.INDS.	4.7	12.82	10	3750	5863	1.59	1.56	.03-
	1.820	1.140	JOR.INDS.RESOURCES	17.0	0.00	29	[illegible]	14830	1.29	1.35	.06+
	1.270	.840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	23.9	0.00	7	3050	2684	.87	.88	.01+
	1.360	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	27.5	0.00	6	2140	2497	1.16	1.17	.01+
	1.470	.930	UNION CH. & VEG.	23.9	0.00	2	200	194	.95	.97	.02+
	INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 118.03	%CHG: +0.07	197	117344	235806			
	GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 153.39	%CHG: +0.75	347	187375	402796			

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDENSDAY 19/03/1997

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
.790	.480	JOR.TRADE FAC.	12.8	0.00	4	4000	1920	.49	.48	.01-
.950	.810	JOR.FIN.INV.CO.75%	E	0.00	7	10500	5460	.81	.77	.04-
.850	.680	UNION INV. 50%	66.0	0.00	6	10950	2081	.69	.69	
.840	.370	ARAB FIN.INVEST.	g	0.00	9	7700	3160	.41	.42	.01+
.950	.810	AL-SHARQ INV. 75%	E	0.00	2	450	236	.81	.78	.03-
.640	.200	JOR.INDS.MATCH-JEMCO	g	0.00	1	2500	600	.24	.24	-
1.690	1.300	NATL. CHLORINE	E	0.00	8	4650	6464	1.39	1.39	-
.690	.440	ARAB INTL.INV.TRD.	g	0.00	4	10000	4300	.44	.43	.01-
.770	.490	NATL. TEXTILE	g	0.00	6	1650	814	.49	.49	-
.850	.400	NATL.MULT.ENG.NAMICO	E	0.00	17	29500	12695	.43	.44	.01+
.660	.430	NAJ'AK DIES & MOULDS	E	0.00	5	2500	1465	.57	.59	.02+
.990	.720	JORDAN STEEL	E	0.00	9	3687	2693	.73	.74	.01+
1.330	.940	UNION TOBACCO 75%	E	0.00	2	100	69	.94	.94	-
.660	.390	INTS. ENG.	25.9	0.00	7	2850	1196	.42	.42	-
1.100	.760	IN. C. CERAMIC	E	0.00	1	50	38	.76	.76	-
.820	.590	NATL. POULTRY	E	0.00	1	5000	3450	.68	.69	.01+
.900	.530	MID.EAST COMPLEX	9.4	0.00	85	180300	142665	.79	.80	.01+
GRAND TOTAL					174	276387	189304			

I : New 12 months high
+ : New 12 months low
N : Listed during the past 12 months
g : Negative P/E
E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

Daily Beat
from the Arabic press

Al Dustour to give shareholders dividends at a rate of 25 per cent

** AFTER POSTING a JD509,000 net profit last year and adding to it JD156,000 of retained earnings from 1995, the general assembly of the Jordan Press and Publishing Company voted to distribute cash dividends to shareholders at a rate of 25 per cent. The company, which publishes the Arabic daily Al Dustour, earned a total of JD6.36 million in 1996 but with total expenditures amounting to JD5.48 million and the operating income was JD870,000.

According to the balance sheet, the company had a total of JD1.16 million in fixed deposits at banks. In addition, the debts to the banks fell from more than JD1.5 million in 1995 to JD968,000 at the end of last year. The net shareholders equity increased to JD4.25 million, an amount that represented 65 per cent of the company's total assets.

The 1996 financial report attributed the 10 per cent rise in expenditure last year to the higher international prices for paper and the financial incentives given to the workers. The increase in earnings was 5.6 per cent above the 1995 figure.

The dividends that will be distributed to shareholders amount to JD443,000 (Al Dustour + Al Ra'i).

New company to focus on marketing Jordanian products abroad

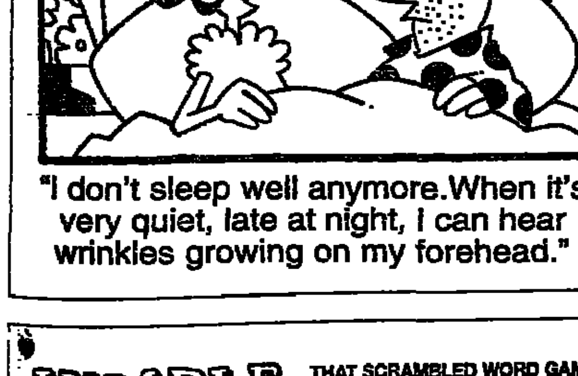
** "THE JORDANIAN Company for Commercial Houses" is the name of a new ambitious economic project that will constitute a new marketing strategy for Jordanian products based on the concept of profitability and owned by the private, JEDCO (the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation), has announced.

The company, which will be a limited shareholding company, will be registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade soon by industrialists, exporters and businessmen who are interested to participate in the project. The capital of the company was not announced but is reported to be large and will be fixed in final form during the meeting of the founding members during the coming few days.

JEDCO Director-General Mohammad Halaiqah said the corporation "will be participating in the company financially and morally by providing all the supporting services needed for its success." The company will be characterised by being "independent from the government" and will be manned by experts in the fields of trade and marketing and working in exporting companies and firms engaged in international marketing. Dr. Halaiqah emphasised that the company's objective would be to focus on export activities to secure the highest possible presence for Jordanian products in international markets and former Soviet republics especially, the Republic *of Uzbekistan. The JEDCO chief said the company* would open branches in international markets according to their capacity and capabilities to absorb Jordanian products. He revealed that a branch in Uzbekistan would be the first to open a preliminary stage to reflect the consumption strength of that market and its large capability to absorb Jordanian products.

Dr. Halaiqah pointed that the "commercial houses" that will be set up by the company will not be substitutes for the JEDCO's "commercial centres." He described the commercial houses as supportive to the centres and noted that they "could be more dynamic than the commercial centres" (Al Dustour).

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"I don't sleep well anymore.When it's very quiet, late at night, I can hear wrinkles growing on my forehead."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

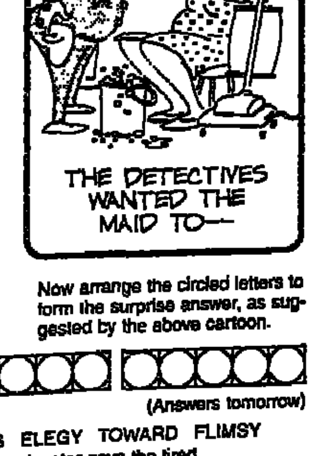
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ENCEP

YERME

EXCOIB

NOBIAL



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here :

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FOCUS ELEGY TOWARD FLIMSY
Answer: What the elevator gave the tired Englishman – A WELCOME LIFT

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Jordan gets preliminary approval to host 9th Pan-Arab Games in 1999

By Mohammad Ghannam in Beirut and Aleen Bannayan in Amman

JORDAN WEDNESDAY got preliminary approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 1999 following a meeting of ministers of youth from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and officials from the Arab League, and Arab Sports Federation.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the visit of the ministerial committee of the Arab Ministers Sports and Youth entrusted with the task of inspecting Lebanon's preparations for the 8th Pan-Arab Games which open in Beirut July 12-27.

The committee announced that 11 countries had so far confirmed participation in the Games. They include Jordan, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Sudan Lebanon, and Yemen.

Jordan's outgoing Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh thanked his fellow ministers for their support of Jordan's bid.

"Hosting the Arab Games will be a privilege for Jordan. It will also be a great chance for serious preparations for the 2000 Sydney Olympics."

Mr. Daoudieh said the Games would also be an opportunity for the Kingdom to improve its existing sports facilities.

"Jordan can hopefully host a successful event and make use of excellent facilities of the ministries of youth and education, Jordanian universities, and clubs in addition to facilities of the Armed Forces and several sports federations like equestrian, squash, and shooting.

Mr. Daoudieh said Jordan had always been a strong supporter of any event enhancing Arab solidarity.

He said that the issue would have to be approved by the Council of Ministers and hoped to get the backing and financing of Arab countries, Arab League and concerned Arab institutions and federations.

"We will exert all efforts to make the Games a success," he added.

Mr. Daoudieh underlined the Kingdom's full support for the Games hosted by Lebanon noting that the Jordanian delegation would actively take part in the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in 1992.

Nineteen events had been set for the Games excluding handball, gymnastics, body building, hockey, diving, and water polo.

Jordan will be competing in 17 of the 19 events at the Games and the Jordan Olympic Committee has already sent the organisers a preliminary list of the 257-member delegation including 130 men and 37 women athletes, 64 officials and coaches, and 26 referees.

Formed by the Arab Ministers of Sports and Youth (AMSY) in their recent meeting in Cairo, the ministerial committee includes in addition to Mr. Daoudieh, the Lebanese Minister of Sports Jean Obeid, AMSY executive officer and Egyptian Minister of Youth Abdul Mun'em Amara, Syrian Sports Minister Samih Mudallal, Secretary General of the Arab Sports Federation Othman Sa'ad, AMSY representative Abdul Hamid Wakil and Zeid Khiyami, the secretary general of the Lebanese Ministry of Sports.

The ministerial committee has so far visited sports facilities at the Beirut's sports city, the golf club, the Mont la Salle Club, Al Rimal Club, the Lebanese Club and the Bourj Hammoud stadium.

They also had a meeting with representative of Reebok sports apparel company who are sponsoring the Games.

Jordan's preliminary entry form at the event includes participating in athletics, basketball, karate, fencing, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, cycling, equestrian, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling, shooting and volleyball.

Other events at the Games include golf, yachting and tennis.

An evaluation team from the Jordan Olympic Committee has started meeting participating sports federations to finalise the Kingdom's delegation.

Jordan finished 9th in the last Pan-Arab Games with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Hosts Syria topped the medals table with 48 points, 31 silver, 37 bronze followed by Egypt and Algeria.

The event had been due to be held last year but was postponed after the Israeli bombardment of southern Lebanon.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria '53, Beirut '57, Casablanca '61, Cairo '65, Damascus '76, Morocco '85 and Damascus '92.

Qassem Abu Ein takes over as minister of culture and youth

AMMAN (J.T.) — With the forming of new Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Mr. Qassem Abu Ein takes over as minister of culture and Youth as the 16th minister to serve in this post since the Ministry of Youth was first formed in 1976.

Previous ministers were:

*Sharif Fawwaz Sharaf 1976-1979.
*Taher Hikmat 1979-1980.
*Ma'an Abu Nowar 1980-1984.
*Abdullah Oweidat Jan. 1984-Nov. 1984
*Hani Khasawneh Nov. 1984-April 1985
*Hisham Sharari May 1985-April 1986
*Eid Dahiyyat April 1986-Nov. 1988.
*Awad Khleifat Dec. 1988-Dec. 1989.
*Ibrahim Ghababsheh Dec. 1989-Jan 1991.
*Khaled Karaki Jan. 1991-July 1991.
*Saleh Irsheidat July 1991-May 1993.
*Abdullah Oweidat May 1993-July 1994.
*Fawwaz Abu Al Ghanam July 1993-Jan. 1995
*Awad Khleifat Jan 1995-Feb. 1996
*Mohammad Daoudieh Feb. 1996-March 1997.

Everyone chasing Sampras at Key Biscayne

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AFP) — World No. 1 Pete Sampras has dominated the ATP Tour so completely that he is having trouble finding someone to challenge him.

"I'm at a point in my career," Sampras said, "where having a rivalry is something I want."

Michael Chang would like nothing more than to give his fellow American exactly what he desires. But even he admits that will be tough.

"To be honest, Pete is in his own category right now," Chang said.

Third-ranked Chang and world number two Thomas Muster lead challengers to the reign of top seed Sampras when the Lipton Championships begin here Thursday.

The $4.5 million event has 96-player men's and women's fields, making it the largest event outside the grand slams. Sampras opens with a second-round match against Romania's Adrian Voinea or Argentina's Mariano Zabaleta.

Sampras began the year 17-0, winning the Australian Open and two other titles for a record 5,684 ranking points. The streak ended with an upset opening-match loss to Czech Bohdan Ulihrach last week at the Champions Cup.

Sampras, seeking his 48th career crown, could match Roy Emerson's record 12 Grand Slam triumphs by completing the sweep with French and U.S. Open and Wimbledon titles.

No man has done it since Rod Laver in 1969 and Sampras has never conquered the red clay of Paris. But at 25, he figures time is on his side.

"Maybe when I am 29 or 30 I will be consumed," he said. "I feel like I have five, six, seven good chances to get lucky and win there one year."

Chang, 17-2 this year, lost in the Australian Open semi-finals but has won 10 matches in a row, including last week's Champions Cup title and a crown last month in Memphis.

Chang has won a tour-best 54 U.S. hardcourt matches since reaching the 1996 Australian Open final. But made little progress on his ultimate goal of overtaking Sampras.

"It's more difficult to become number one than it is to win a grand slam," Chang said. "To be number one, you have to have consistent results over a 52-week period. Obviously it's still difficult to win a Grand Slam title. But I think it is probably even more difficult to be number one."

Chang could become the rival that Sampras has lacked since Andre Agassi battled him for the top ranking two years ago. Chang won here in 1992 while Sampras claimed the crown in 1993 and 1994.

Agassi, the two-time defending champion here, has lost his past four matches and fallen to 13th in the rankings. He is 5-8 since last year's U.S. Open.

"I haven't anticipated it being an easy road by any means," Agassi said of his bid to return to form. "I certainly don't think it is going to get any easier. But I have got to start somewhere."

The same is true for another former number one, Germany's Boris Becker, who came here angry after German tax agents raided his Munich home amid reports he was moving permanently to the United States.

Becker, who has not spoken publicly since his arrival, opens after a bye against either compatriot Henrik Dreekmann or Uruguay's Marcelo Filippini and could face champions cup runner-up Ulihrach in the third round.

Clay-court master Muster is 15-3 this year with an all-hardcourt schedule and could be tougher than usual here. He opens after a bye against either Grant Stafford of South Africa or India's Leander Paes.

Muster won his first hardcourt crown since 1990 in Adelaide earlier this year in Dubai, taking the final over Goran Ivanisevic, who is seeded fourth here and still seeking his first north American title.

World No. 4 Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia is out with an injured finger and 14th-ranked Todd Martin is absent with a sore elbow.

Hingis reign begins as Seles returns

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AFP) — Martina Hingis can begin her reign as the youngest world number one in tennis history with a triumphant coronation or by backing into an abdicated throne.

Her performance here at the $1.75 million Lipton Championships that begin Thursday will determine which way she replaces injured Steffi Graf when the next WTA tour ratings are released on March 31.

To claim the crown as a winner, the 16-year-old Swiss sensation will have to overcome 95 rivals in a field that includes the only other women to topple Graf from the top spot — Monica Seles and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario.

"It's good for the game and for women's tennis," Sanchez said of Hingis taking over the top spot. "It is more competition and she is definitely a player who has been playing well and winning a lot lately."

Hingis will be 16 years and six months old when she claims the top spot, replacing Seles as the youngest number one ever. Seles was 17 years, three months and 19 days when she passed Graf on March 11, 1991.

Graf, a winner here the past three years, has been sidelined by an injured left knee and is not expected to return until next month in Hamburg, Germany.

The German star has enjoyed a record 374 weeks atop the rankings but lost enough points by not defending titles here and at last week's Evert Cup that Hingis was assured of replacing her even without playing here.

Graf has not been out of the number one spot since June 12, 1995, although she has shared that designation with Monica Seles for much of the time under a special WTA ruling for Seles after her 1993 stabbing.

Since Seles dropped out of the top spot following her stabbing, Graf has been number one all but 12 weeks since June 7, 1993.

Seles has not played on tour since last November when she retired from her opening match against Japan's Kimiko Date at the WTA championships. She has had a broken bone in her right index finger but is also sitting out because her father and coach, Karolj, is ill with stomach cancer.

Hingis is unbeaten in 23 matches this season, having won her first Grand Slam title at the Australian Open without losing a set.

Graf admits that the rise of Hingis, while bad for her, is good for the WTA.

"Martina exudes a freshness that can only be good for the tour," Graf said.

Sanchez-Vicario is also ready to make her move for the top, although she failed as the top seed at the Evert Cup earlier this month. She is now being coached by her brother, former men's pro tour player Emilio Sanchez.

France's 13th-ranked Mary Pierce, who fell to Hingis in the Australian Open final, joins Graf on the sidelines. She has a strained right calf but had already said she planned to skip this event for work on clay.

Also missing will be sixth-ranked Conchita Martinez of Spain.

Martina Hingis

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TAKE THE ONLY CHANCE

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A Q J 4
♡ A 7
◇ A J 6 4
♣ A 7 3

WEST
♠ 6 5
♡ Q 10 8 4
◇ 9 7 5 3
♣ J 9 2

EAST
♠ K 2
♡ K 6 5 3
◇ Q 8 2
♣ 10 8 5 4

SOUTH
♠ 10 9 8 7 3
♡ J 9 2
◇ K 10
♣ K Q 6

The bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
2NT	Pass	3♠	Pass
5♠	Pass	6♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Six of ♠

All finesses stand an equal chance of success. However, that does not mean that it makes no difference which finesse you take, or which way you take a finesse.

North was not at all shy in the bidding. First, North upgraded the four aces in hand to open the bidding with two no trump. Then, when South showed a spade suit and values for game, North chose to issue a slam invitation, based on the ruffing value and powerful trump support. Since South held considerably more than promised, acceptance was automatic.

West led a trump and the jack lost to East's king. East safely returned the two of spades, taken on the table. How should declarer play the diamond suit?

Besides the diamond finesse, which can be taken either way, declarer can cash the king-ace of diamonds and ruff a diamond, which would set up the jack should either defender hold Q x x in the suit. Is it a matter of guesswork which line declarer chooses?

Not at all. Once the trump finesse has lost, declarer must avoid losing a heart trick if the slam is to succeed. The only way to accomplish that is to get two discards on diamonds, and the only lie of the cards where that will come to pass is if East holds the queen of diamonds guarded no more than twice.

Since the lead was in dummy and trumps had been drawn, South finessed the ten of diamonds at trick three. After clearing the king of diamonds, declarer crossed to the ace of clubs and cashed the ace of diamonds, discarding a heart from hand. When the queen of diamonds dropped, declarer was able to discard another heart on the jack of diamonds and the slam rolled home.

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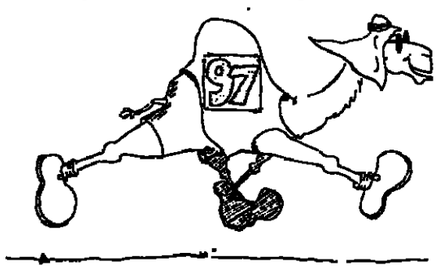

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Adel Imam, Shireen & Saeed Saleh
Bakhit Wa Adilah (2)
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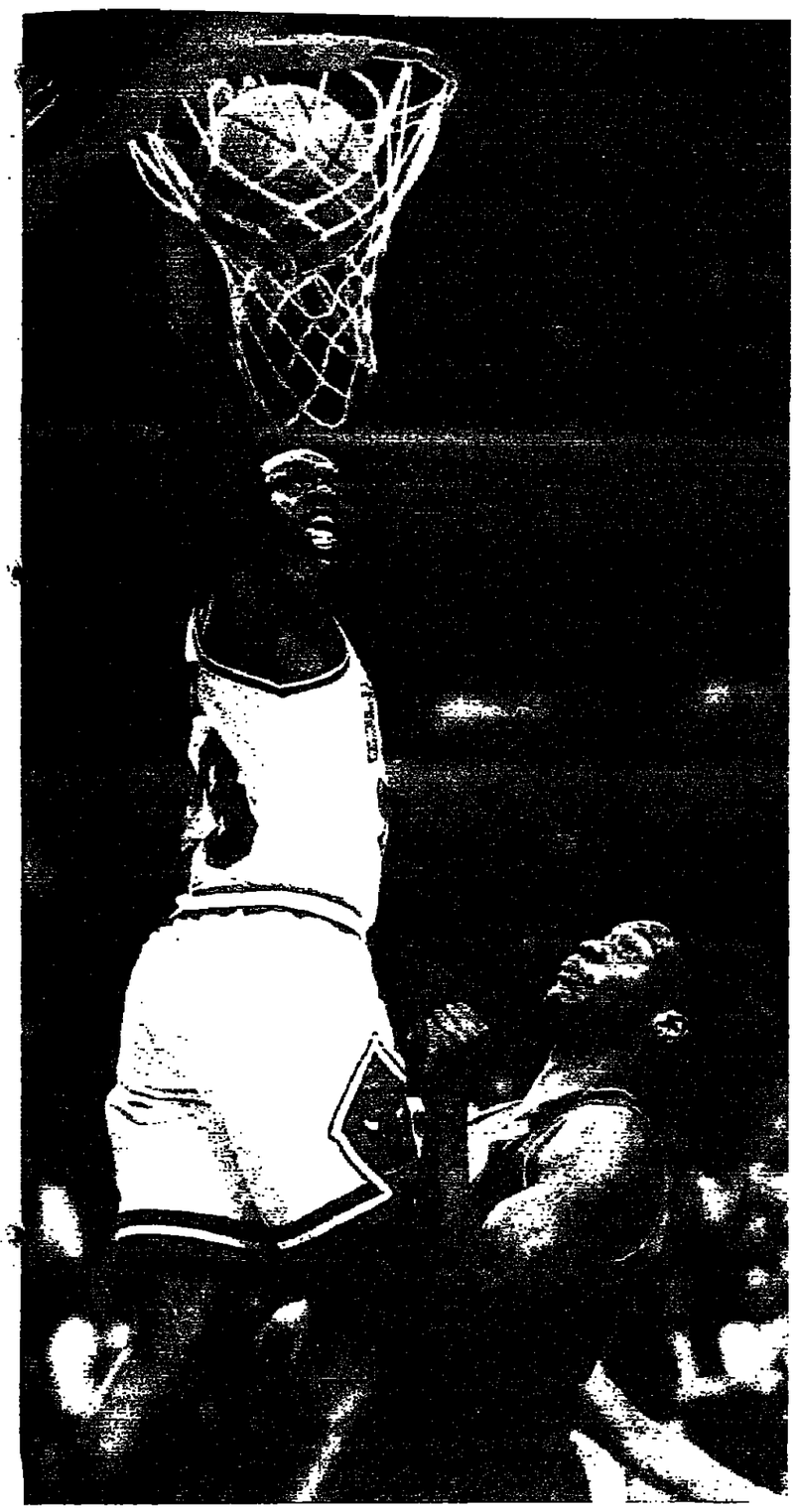

Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan gets by Seattle Supersonics' Shawn Kemp to score during first quarter action at the United Centre. Chicago defeated Seattle 89-87 (Reuters photo)

Bulls edge Sonics 89-87 in OT

CHICAGO (AFP) — Michael Jordan scored 32 points and matched his career high with 18 rebounds here Tuesday, leading Chicago past Seattle 89-87 in a 1996 National Basketball Association finals rematch.

The Bulls, who took their first lead with only two minutes and 20 seconds remaining in regulation time, won in over-time when Seattle's Gary Payton fouled Jordan with three seconds remaining in the extra five-minute period.

Jordan, the NBA scoring leader, sank two free throws after the foul to create the final margin. The Supersonics were short on a potential winning shot at the final buzzer.

"It was a tough game," Jordan said. "It was a 'gut' game for us.

"I guess the home call went for us. I didn't have a great night shooting. Neither did Scottie (Pippen). But we got the job done."

The Bulls won both their meetings with Seattle this season.

Chicago beat the Sonics in six games last year to capture their fourth NBA crown in six years.

After losing twice last week and looking lacklustre in beating league doormats, Jordan and his teammates wanted to let all rivals know they would not be beaten easily.

"This was a message game for us," he said. "We're getting into a rhythm. We're getting more comfortable with ourselves. When playoff time comes, we will be ready."

A controversial foul call against Australian Luc Longley led to the overtime. The Chicago centre was called for hitting Payton on a three-point shot, setting up the tying points.

"No excuses there. It was a clean block," Longley said. "That was a shame."

Longley was impressive, finishing with 16 points, nine rebounds and three blocked shots. Longley's efforts helped the Bulls forget the absence of injured Toni Kukoc, who should be back by the weekend.

NBA results

Toronto	117	Philadelphia	105
Indiana	115	Minnesota	97
Houston	97	New Jersey	89
New York	98	Vancouver	73
Chicago	89	Seattle	87 (OT)
Washington	86	Dallas	85
LA Clippers	121	Phoenix	111
Portland	92	Sacramento	87

Monaco thrash Newcastle in UEFA quarters

PARIS (AFP) — French League leader's Monaco recorded the most impressive win in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals on Tuesday with a 3-0 home win, 4-0 on aggregate, over top English Premiership side Newcastle United.

The other three teams to join the stylish French side in the semi-final draw on Friday were Inter Milan, who beat Anderlecht 2-1, 3-2 on aggregate, Tenerife who beat Brondby 2-0, 2-1 on aggregate, and Schalke 04 who earned a creditable 1-1 draw away at Valencia to come through 3-1 on aggregate.

A fierce drive from Sylvain Legwinski, a member of France's Olympic team in Atlanta last year, three minutes before the interval left Newcastle with a mountain to climb.

And the evident gulf in class between the sides meant the task proved well beyond them.

Algerian international Ali Benarbia delivered the killer blow five minutes after the restart to send Kenny Dalglish's men spinning out of the tournament in disarray.

The brilliant Benarbia then crowned his performance with the third from a stunning freekick midway through the second half before being substituted near the end to a standing ovation.

The French title favourites were bidding to become only the third French side to ever to oust an English team in European competition, Newcastle themselves being the last victims when they lost to Bastia back in 1977 in the UEFA Cup second round.

However, Jean Tigana, the Monaco coach, denied his side had had a complex about facing an English side.

"Here we don't think about the opposition. We just want to make constant progress. What interests me is winning, pure and simple — not who we're playing against, and I'm proud of my lads."

With both of their England international strikers Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand ruled out through injury, attacking duties fell to enigmatic Colombian Faustino Asprilla — who had previously netted five times in the tournament — and veteran Peter Beardsley.

United manager Kenny Dalglish also opted to deploy want-away French winger David Ginola, who put in an ineffectual performance, and later added fuel to the fire in his uneasy relationship with Dalglish after the tie.

"Monaco deserved their victory. They have become a great side.

But did we actually play football out there? You can't play like that and expect to beat a side of Monaco's quality," Ginola said.

Jordan competes in Syrian, Qatari equestrian competitions today

By Ibrahim Haddadin in Damascus and Roufan Nahhas in Amman

PARTICIPANTS from Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait and Syria start competition in the Al Basel International Equestrian Championship Thursday.

Jordan's national equestrian team arrived in Damascus Tuesday with six participants taking part in the four-day event.

The team started an extensive training session to adapt to the cold weather of the Syrian capital.

Egypt's 16-member team is the largest delegation headed by Adam Hamad who will also take part in the Qatar International Equestrian Championship.

The four-day championship celebrates the National Day of Syria. Morocco and the United Arab Emirates surprisingly declined participation.

Jordan's team consists of Hani Bisharat, Sinan Nashashibi, Fares Taher, Ibrahim Bisharat, Suzan Al Bakheet, Shereen Al Rasekh, Saed Kilani.

Hussam Baho and Abeer Khatib declined participation because of personal commitments.

Jordan's captain and veteran jockey Hani Bisharat who is also preparing for the Qatar International Championship said that the team had trained hard for the event and hoped to score an advanced standing.

On the other hand, President of the Royal Jordanian Equestrian Federation Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein arrives in Doha today heading the Kingdom's delegation to the 6th Qatar International Horse Festival.

Eighteen Jordanian horses will take part in the festival. Ten will be competing in the endurance race, two in the horse racing competition which started Wednesday and six in the horse show.

The much-awaited 4th endurance race will start Friday covering 42 kilometres of desert terrain.

Horses will start the race at 6 a.m. at Ras Laffan and reach the finish line at east of the city of Roweis.

Arab Clubs Basketball Championship

Jazireh meet Lebanon's Hikmeh after defeat to Tunisia's Zahra'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

TUNISIA'S AL ZAHRA' Tuesday beat Jordan's Al Jazireh 92-60 to qualify for the second round of the 11th Arab Clubs Basketball Championship currently underway in Nabel, Tunisia.

Al Zahra', who currently lead the Tunisian League, won the first half 46-29 and demonstrated their form as serious contenders for the title.

However, their 32-point win came after Al Jazireh played one of their worst matches and lost the efforts of key players Yousef Abu Bakr and Ma'an Odeh when they collided head on and had to be stitched up.

Star centre Hussam Lutfi was again the team's top scorer with 27 points.

Al Jazireh had lost their first match 79-71 to Algeria's Bofariq after coming back from a 17-point gap.

In another Group 2 match, Algeria's Bofariq beat Lebanon's Al Hikmeh 64-62 in overtime.

Al Jazireh will next face Al Hikmeh who seem to have lost their qualifying chances after also losing their first match to Al Zahra' 79-68.

Second round matches start Friday.

Making their inaugural Arab Championship participation, Al Jazireh's mostly under-22 players face clubs who have professional players on their teams.

Seif Lada'a, Ala' Bilbeisi, Ihab Qaddoumi, Naser Alawneh and Mu'tasem Salameh are on Al Jazireh's team joining teams from nine Arab Countries in the event hosted by Al Mal'ab Al Nabli.

The participating 16 men's teams have been divided into four groups

Group 1: Al Mal'ab (Tunisia), Jahra'a (Kuwait), Al Riyadi (Lebanon), Al Murouj (Libya).

Group 2: Al Zahra' (Tunisia), Al Hikmeh (Lebanon), Al Jazireh (Jordan), Bofariq (Algeria).

Group 3: Zamalek (Egypt), Al Ittihad (Tunisia), Al Ittihad (Saudi Arabia), Al Bina' (Algeria).

Group 4: Al Wadi (Tunisia), Al Ittihad (Egypt), Al Nasr (Libya), Ohud (Saudi Arabia).

In matches so far Al Mala'b beat Kuwait's Al Jahra' 86-57; Tunisia' Al Ittihad beat Egypt's Al Zamalek 59-55; Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad beat Algeria's Al Bina' 64-57.

Only six teams are taking part in the 7th Women's Championship. They include hosts Al Hilal, Al Safa' and Al Mal'ab of Tunisia, Egypt's Al Ahli, Hussein Dai of Algeria, and Lebanon's Homenetmen.

In previous Arab Championships, Jordan's former First Division champions Al Ahli and reigning champs Al Orthodoxi represented Jordan but declined to participate this year citing preparations for the country's First Division Championship.

Titleholders Al Orthodoxi who had an undisputed reign over the country's basketball scene from 1976-1989 won back the title in the past two seasons and hope to do so again with their new young lineup.

They started the season by winning the Under-22 championship title last month and beat Syria's Al Wihdeh in a friendly match last week.

On the other hand, Al Ahli are hoping to regain their title which they won in 90, 92, 93 and 94.

They have recruited new Armenian coach Raffi Cholukyan, who was in charge of the Russian team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Cholukyan, who was former head coach of the Soviet Union's teams had led the 1973 team to the European champion women's team.

Third ranked Al Jazireh started the season on a sour note losing their two-year U-22 reign although they beat Syria's Al Jeish and Al Ittihad in friendly matches last month.

They have an improved team, well-known for their unyielding, competitive spirit.

Under the guidance of head coach Fadi Sabbah, the team has been a strong contender in the Kingdom's First Division Championship for the past two years.

In the last competition they beat Al Ahli and had a sure shot at second if not first place but later faltered in the final round.

Al Jazireh hope that the Arab Championship will provide the team with a chance to test their readiness for the First Division Championship which they will try to win for the first time in their history.

Ekoku back for Nigeria in World Cup qualifier

LAGOS (R) — New Nigerian coach Phillipe Troussier recalled strikers Efan Ekoku and Christopher Ohenhen Tuesday for next month's crucial World Cup qualifier against fellow west Africans Guinea.

Frenchman Troussier, appointed last month, included Wimbledon's Ekoku and Compostela's Ohenhen in a 23-man squad for the April 5 game.

Troussier replaced coach Amodu Shaibu, sacked in January after coming in for Dutchman Jo Bonfrere, who quit in October after alleging poor treatment and interference in his duties.

Olympic champions nigeria, second behind Guinea in their group, must win to keep alive their chances of qualifying for the 1998 World Ccup finals in France. Only one team will qualify from the group of four.

Ekoku and Ohenhen have each scored 11 league goals this season.

Ekoku last played for Nigeria in 1995, while uncapped Ohenhen was on the substitutes' bench in 1990.

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Arabs warn Israel of violence from its moves

CAIRO (Agencies) — Strong words of protest and grim pronouncements over the state of Middle East peace came from around the Arab World as bulldozers began clearing away rocks and earth Tuesday afternoon on the pine-covered Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab East Jerusalem where a new Jewish settlement is to be built.Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, saying the Middle East peace process faced its worst crisis, warned Wednesday of "a new era of violence" if Israel went ahead and built a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Belgian Foreign Minister Erik Derycke, Mr. Mubarak accused Israel of pursuing policies based on the "arrogance of power."

The crisis over the settlement project was the gravest to face the Middle East peace process since his predecessor Anwar Sadat made his historic trip to Israel in 1977, the Egyptian leader said.

"What is happening now is very dangerous," said Mr. Mubarak, whose country became the first Arab state to sign a peace treaty with Israel in 1979. "I feel the consequences may be terrible and may hurt all of us and lead to instability in the area."

"If this settlement is built, this will not be the end of the whole thing. It will be the beginning of a new era of violence which we would have liked to avoid," said Mr. Mubarak, who has been in office since Sadat was gunned down in 1981 by radical militants opposed to peace with Israel.

Mr. Mubarak also commented on statements by Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu that Israel, like any other nation, had a right to build in its own capital.

"I say 'no' to him if he says Jerusalem is like Cairo, and I say 'no' to him if he says Jerusalem is like Washington.

"Jerusalem is occupied, we have a right to build, he doesn't," Mr. Mubarak said. "He absolutely has no right."

"To employ the method of arrogance — the arrogance of power — will not bring about a solution. The issue of Jerusalem will not be solved by bulldozers," Mr. Mubarak said, citing the city's status as holy to Muslims, Jews and Christians alike.

Syria: New intifada inevitable

Syria said Wednesday that a Palestinian uprising against Israel for building a new Jewish settlement on the edge of Arab East Jerusalem is inevitable.

"The children of the intifada and the children of the occupation resistance will burn the ground beneath the occupiers' feet until the bulldozers stop," the ruling party organ Al Baath said.

The Palestinians "will foil the plot to settle Abu Ghneim which is not, as Benyamin Netanyahu claims, the simple building of a residential neighborhood but the most dangerous type of settlement since the holy city was occupied" in 1967 by Israel, it said.

Al Baath added that "the Palestinian masses will not heed calls for calm because they can fight for their rights thanks to their iron will and unwavering faith."

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has appealed to the Palestinian people not to resort to violence.

But the official Syrian Al Thawra newspaper said "(Israeli-Palestinian) confrontation is inescapable. Israel possesses more sophisticated weaponry but the Palestinians, strengthened by the justice of their cause, will use their bodies as shields."

Gulf Arab newspapers also warned that violence would erupt with Israel's construction of the new Jewish settlement.

"Israel's construction of a new Jewish settlement means only one thing. It's the annihilation of the peace process and any possibility of peaceful Arab-Israeli coexistence," the Qatari newspaper Al Raya said.

"The harbingers of the storm have started to appear in the occupied Arab territories and the explosion can occur at any moment," said the daily, which reflects the official view.

Al Raya called on Arab countries, which are to hold several meetings in the next few days, to "take firm and efficient positions in order to face Israeli policy."

Qatar's Al Sharq newspaper warned that Thursday's attack on Israeli schoolgirls by a Jordanian soldier "gives perhaps an indication of what the Arabs are feeling, since they can no longer tolerate Israeli provocation."

In Saudi Arabia, King Fahd termed the new settlement "a violation of peace agreements." The pro-government Al Madina daily Mr. Netanyahu "defied the whole world by imposing faits accomplis" in Jerusalem.

"The task of the Arabs is not to impose calm to preserve this agonising peace or keep the body when it has died, but rather to prevent Israeli attacks against peace and Arab land," the daily said.

From Jeddah, the 53-nation Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) accused Israel of attempting to "judaise" Jerusalem and said it supported the Palestinians' claim to the city as the capital of their would-be state.

In Baghdad, the Al Thawra newspaper denounced the construction of the new settlement and mocked Arab-Israeli peace agreements.

The ruling Baath Party newspaper criticized Israel's negotiating partners.

"Now, the Palestinians and those who struck deals sponsored by the United States are lamenting," the daily said.

From Amman, the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, which opposes the 1993 peace deal between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel, called for a Palestinian uprising to protest the start of work.

"The Palestinian Authority should answer the call of the Palestinian people to go into continuous intifada," Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghoshe told Reuters.

The militant Palestinian movement Islamic Jihad called on Palestinians to do "everything possible" to stop the construction of the new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

"Take part in the jihad, do everything possible, place your bodies in front of the bulldozers which are destroying the bones of our ancestors," the group said in a statement.

"We have nothing to lose but our blood and our lives in the sacrifice for Jerusalem and Palestine," the statement said. "We will not give away even a piece of our Jerusalem."

Islamic Jihad, whose followers carried out several suicide bombings in Israel in 1995, urged Palestinians not to heed Mr. Arafat's call to abstain from violence.

It denounced Arafat's peace agreements with the Jewish state as "defeatist and humiliating" and accused the Palestinian leader and Israel of "plotting against Jerusalem."

A Palestinian wears a crown of thorns as he is symbolically crucified during a Wednesday demonstration protesting Israel's construction of a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem (Reuters photo)

Peres again floats idea of 'national unity' coalition

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Nine months after being voted out of office, Labour leader Shimon Peres has relaunched behind-the-scenes efforts to join a "national unity" government with right-wing Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, a press report said Wednesday.

The mass circulation Yediot Aharonot reported in detail on a dinner held by Mr. Peres Tuesday night with eight Labour deputies during which the former prime minister was quoted as telling his colleagues Mr. Netanyahu himself backed a unity government.

"I am convinced that in his heart, the prime minister has already decided on such a solution," participants quoted Mr. Peres as saying, adding that Labour would get at least the foreign affairs and defence portfolios and thus be able to defend the peace process.

Mr. Peres said he thought the "national unity" government would become a live option once a police investigation into alleged government corruption surrounding the aborted appointment in January of an attorney-general is completed.

Israeli press reports said Wednesday that the probe was nearly finished and was not expected to yield charges of criminal wrongdoing against Mr. Netanyahu himself, although two close aides could face indictment.

The Yediot Aharanot said Mr. Peres told his dinner partners that he had not received any offer from Mr. Netanyahu to join a government.

But one participant, Deputy Rafi Elul, told the paper, "if Peres had not finalised things with (Netanyahu) in a general outline, he would not have come to try and convince us."

Several senior members of Mr. Netanyahu's own Likud Party have also come out recently for a left-right unity cabinet, saying the government needed to represent the broadest consensus possible ahead of the final stage of peace negotiations with the Palestinians due to begin soon.

Mr. Netanyahu denied to reporters Wednesday having any design to bring Labour into goverment, but his statements were greeted with media scepticism.

In the Labour camp, Mr. Peres' initiative was met with outright hostility by former army chief and Defence Minister Ehud Barak, the leading candidate to become party leader when Mr. Peres' term expires this summer.

Mr. Barak reportedly fears Mr. Peres will be able to hold on as party chief if Labour enters a unity government before leadership elections scheduled for June.

Arabs may hold limited summit

DUBAI (AFP) — Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries were trying to organise a mini-summit on Israel senior Arab officials said Wednesday.

A high-level official in Riyadh said the beginning of construction of a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem Tuesday meant such a summit was urgently needed to adopt a unified Arab position against Israel.

However, the United States has made it known to the Arabs that it does not favour the holding of a mini-summit and fears that it would result in "intransigent positions which could harm the peace process," the official said under cover of anonymity.

An Arab diplomat who asked to remain anonymous said "some Arab countries were against holding a mini-summit for now and wanted to wait for the results of U.S. intervention with the Israelis."

The official in Riyadh said Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak had discussed the meeting with Morocco's King Hassan II, the head of the Organisation for Islamic Conference's (OIC) Jerusalem Committee, during a visit to Morocco last week.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat sent Palestinian Minister for International Cooperation Nabil Shaath to Cairo Wednesday for talks on the peace process after Israel's decision to go ahead with construction of the settlement.

The mini-summit would be held on the sidelines of an extraordinary OIC summit which opens Sunday in Islamabad and of a Jerusalem Committee meeting March 27 in Rabat, the Arab diplomat said.

Mr. Arafat is leaning toward holding the meeting but at the same time does not want to annoy the Americans, the diplomat said.

"Arab public opinion is frustrated by Israel's attitude, and Arab leaders are aware of this, which is why they think holding the meeting is necessary," a senior Arab official said.

"When the Israeli government under Shimon Peres wanted to confiscate Arab land in East Jerusalem in May 1995, the Arab threat to hold a summit was enough to make it retract."

Moves at U.N.

At the United Nations meanwhile the Arab group agreed wednesday to present to the Security Council a resolution calling on Israel to halt all housing construction in Arab East Jerusalem.

The Arab group also bolstered the Palestinian demand for "an immediate meeting" of the Security Council.

Qatar's Ambassador Nasser Ben Hamad Al Khalifa told journalists that "a resolution is the right approach."

"We hope the Americans this time will discover that Israel will not listen to anything less than a resolution by the Security council," said Sheikh Nasser, who is acting president of the Arab group.

He added that other countries "will be welcomad" as co-sponsors of the Arab resolution.

The United States, a permanent member of the Security Council, used its veto March 7 to overturn a European-sponsored resolution calling the planned settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab East Jerusalem "illegal" and asking Israel to refrain from any action that would damage the peace process.

Sudanese rebels push on Juba

ON THE ROAD BETWEEN YEI AND JUBA, Sudan (AFP) — Sudanese rebels were advancing northeast up this key road Wednesday towards Juba, the south's main city, as journalists confirmed that the crossroads town of Yei had been captured from government forces.

Rebel leader John Garang told journalists that the war to free the largely Christian and animist south of Sudan from domination by the Arabised, Islamic north was now over.

"I declare the war over in southern Sudan because we have practically liberated eastern and western Equatoria," he said during a roadside press conference.

His Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) announced last week that it had captured Yei on March 11, but the Khartoum government insisted its soldiers still held the town.

The SPLA fighters are now 66 kilometres from Juba, Colonel Garang said, adding that several thousand SPLA troops were garrisoned in Yei.

The AFP correspondent saw destroyed government trucks and burnt villages.

Col. Garang said government troops were withdrawing from Kajo-Keji, east of Yei and close to the White Nile.

He claimed SPLA fighters had killed 3,000 government troops and captured 14 tanks and 17 artillery guns during its current offensive, and was holding more than 1,000 prisoners of war.

Col. Garang described relations with northern opposition leaders in the National Democratic Alliance as good.

The SPLA has joined them in a bid to topple the fundamentalist government of Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir.

The Khartoum regimes has accused Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, where the opposition alliance is based, of joining the rebels, a charge all three have denied.

Iran is trying to mediate between Sudan and Uganda, but comments by Sudanese officials indicate that the efforts may not have much chance of success.

Somalia factional leaders seek greater Arab support

CAIRO (AFP) — Somali faction leaders on Wednesday called for greater Arab support during a meeting here with Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid aimed at defusing the crisis in their country.

The meeting grouped a delegation of the Somali National Salvation Council, headed by Adam Abdullah Nur, and representatives of the 22-member pan-Arab group of which Somalia is a member.

The council called on the Arab League for support by setting up a special fund to help the Somali people overcome economic hardships as well as appointing a special envoy to Somalia, Mr. Nur said.

"The Arab Nation showed little concern towards Somalia's problems compared to other Arab issues," Mr. Nur said, urging Arab countries to open up their universities to Somali students.

A statement by the Arab League, meanwhile, called on "all Somali factions to take part in the peace process underway (in Somalia) in order to convene a national reconciliation conference."

"As a first step towards achieving this goal, the Arab League calls on all Somali factions to stop acts of violence in order to create the necessary conditions to pursue the dialogue which has become more necessary than ever," it said.

The Arab League places all its capabilities towards reaching national reconciliation," in Somalia, the statement said.

Somalia has been torn by civil war since the fall of its leader Mohammad Siad Barre in January 1991 and has been without a government.

Representatives from 26 rival Somali factions — except the faction headed by Somali warlord Hussein Mohammad Aideed — set up the National Salvation Council in January ahead of creating a transitional government.

Rival Somali faction chiefs arrived in Egypt on Friday.

On Monday they held talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who underscored the need for reconciliation in Somalia as a step to maintain stability in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. Musa also pledged that Egypt will support efforts by international and regional organisations to achieve an end to the crisis in Somalia as well as pursue contacts with all Somali factions.

The council has been seeking Arab pressure to persuade Somalia's self-styled "president" Aideed to join a reconciliation meeting.

A spokesman for Aideed said in Mogadishu that the warlord would travel to Egypt on March 27 for bilateral talks with the leaders of the "friendly Arab republic" but would not attend this week's meeting of other Somali faction leaders.

Meanwhile in Somalia, two rival warlords are sending militia reinforcements to the Galgudud region, where clashes between their supporters claimed the lives of dozens of people earlier this week, witnesses said.

Factional fighting erupted on Sunday Galgudud's Bergan village, pitting Abgal Clan supporters of north Mogadishu warlord Ali Mahdi Mohammad against those of Mohammad Qanyare Afrah, a Murusade and an Aideed ally, who has his headquarters in south Mogadishu.

At least 23 people were killed and 36 others wounded, according to medical sources and villagers. Earlier reports said 11 people had been killed and 18 wounded.

Bergan and Ausweyne villages have remained tense since Sunday's clashes and observers said the arrival of heavily-armed militiamen and battle wagons from Mogadishu could escalate the conflict, which residents said was sparked by a land dispute.

Kuwaiti gives money to mother of Dakamseh

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A Kuwaiti businessman said Wednesday he has donated $10,000 to support the mother of a Jordanian soldier who killed seven Israeli schoolgirls last week.

Businessman Abdul Hamid Mansour Al Mazidi told AFP he made the gift for "humanitarian reasons."

"I saw her cry on television and I felt that she had lost her (financial) support," he said.

"My action was dictated by humanitarian and nationalist considerations because the mother of the soldier is also a victim," he said.

"I also wanted to show solidarity with this mother, a feeling which is shared by a good number of Kuwaitis and Arabs."

He said he contacted lawyer Salah Al Hashem, who represents the soldier, about the gift.

Israel to distribute pills in case of nuclear accident

TEL AVIV (AFP) — In the event of an accident at the Dimona nuclear reactor, Israel has a store of pills that will be distributed to local residents to counter the effects of radioactive gases, a scientist confirmed Wednesday.

Ephraim Asculai, a senior safety expert with the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, said the military would distribute the pill to residents of Dimona, a town in the Naqab desert.

Mr. Asculai testified about the pills tuesday before the science committee of the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

"We would distribute such pills because the world does it," he said Wednesday. "It's a worldwide practice."

France's health minister said Tuesday that the French government would hand out iodine pills next month — the anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion — to about 600,000 people living near nuclear power plants.

The potassium iodide pills counteract the effects of radioactive iodine, one of the most dangerous elements released during a leak, can collect in dangerous levels in the thyroid gland.

Mr. Asculai, however, said that at a small reactor such as Dimona, the chance of dangerous levels of radioactive iodine leaking is very small.

Israel is widely believed to manufacture nuclear weapons at the Dimona plant, although it has never confirmed having nuclear capability. Mordechai Vanunu, a former technician at Dimona, is serving an 18-year sentence for giving the London Times photographs from inside the reactor.

Based on the photographs, experts determined in 1986 that Israel had the world's sixth-largest stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Dimona's mayor, Gabi Laloush, told the Yediot Ahronot newspaper he was less concerned with the remote possibility of a radioactive leak than with finding an antidote to his city's rising jobless rate.

"Forget such nonsense, i don't know what pills they were talking about," he said. "I think we should distribute anti-unemployment pills to the residents of Dimona."

COLUMN

Bruce Lee to appear on film

HONG KONG (AFP) — Shannon Lee, sole surviving child of late Kung-Fu movie star Bruce Lee, is to appear in a feature movie, the film producer said Wednesday. Lee, 27, has signed to appear in a film produced by Golden Harvest which was involved in producing Bruce Lee's films in the 1970s, but the role will not involve any of the martial arts which took her father to fame. Shannon Lee, who was only four when her father died, has a degree in voice studies, has appeared in muscials, operas and choral concerts in the United States where she was brought up. She has also appeared in "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story," the biopic of her father, and Cage 2.

Faithfull wants U.S. visa

DUBLIN (AFP) — British singer Marianne Faithfull says she feels "persecuted" by delays in securing a U.S. work visa that she claimed caused her to miss a Boston concert. Convicted of drugs possession in 1984, Faithfull, the former girlfriend of the Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger, says U.S. authorities routinely delay her visa requests, although they always grant them in the end. Faithfull, who lives near Dublin, said she had expected the conviction to be erased after 10 years.

Right over 'Elvis' name is over

LONDON (AFP) — An East London shopkeeper is free to continue selling Elvis Presley Memorabilia after a high court judge on Tuesday ruled the late singer's widow Priscilla did not have exclusive right to his name. "Even if Elvis Presley was still alive," said the judge, "he would not be entitled to stop a fan from naming his son, his dog or goldfish, his car or his house 'Elvis' or 'Elvis Presley,' simply by reason of the fact that it was the name given to him at birth by his parents." The decision ended a long legal battle between East Ender Sid Shaw and Priscilla Presley, head of Elvis Presley Enterprises (EPE) of Memphis, Tennessee, who had sought to block his sales of Elvis Memorabilia ranging from watches to toiletries.

Hillary writes for Vogue

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — U.S. first lady Hillary Clinton is about to make a foray into glossy magazine journalism, by writing about her current African trip for Vogue magazine. Mrs. Clinton has hired celebrity photographer Annie Lebowitz to take the pictures to go with the article on her 12-day tour of the continent that began Saturday in Senegal, the South African Press Agency said. Officials confirmed that the first lady would swap her diplomatic briefcase for a typewriter but she did not say when the article would be published.

Clinton could sue Norman over injury

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton could settle some of his debts if he chose to sue Australian golfer Greg Norman after stumbling on some dimly-lit steps at his residence and injuring his knee, lawyers told the Washington Post. "It's very garden-variety," said personal-injury specialist Jack Olender. "You go for pain and suffering, interference with ability to lead a normal life, wife has a claim. The really large item is impairment of earning capacity if he doesn't recover fully. That would put it in the millions of dollars."